

Hafa Adai!

'Excellent healthcare efforts behind low mortality numbers' **PAGE 2**

'OPA lacks authority to hear administrative appeals' **PAGE 6**

\$1

# Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

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## S. Korea airline suspends flights

By **KIMBERLY B. ESMORES**  
kimberly\_esmores@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

The steady rise in the number of COVID-19 infections, particularly from the omicron variant, has resulted in South Korean airlines deciding to temporarily halt air service to Saipan.

According to several South Korean media outlets, South Korean airlines servicing the Saipan route have either suspended flights or have reduced their service.

One of those airlines cites T'way Air as having decided to suspend its two flights a week schedule until Jan. 28.

Meanwhile, Jeju air has also de-

**See S. KOREA on Page 4**

## 58 new cases; shipment of Pfizer kid doses expected Sat.

By **JOSHUA SANTOS**  
joshua\_santos@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

The CNMI recorded 58 new cases of COVID-19, according to the latest news release from the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp.

It said that 56 of the lat-

est cases were identified on Jan. 3, and one each on Jan. 2 and Dec. 31.

### COMMUNITY VULNERABILITY

#### LEGEND:

- Red: Least safe
- Orange
- Yellow
- Blue
- Green: Safest

Source: Office of the Governor

By method, 20 of the cases were found through contact tracing, 32 through community testing, and six through

**See 58 on Page 4**

### AT A GLANCE

As of 5:27pm, Jan. 5, 2022

#### VACCINATIONS IN THE CNMI

Eligible Population **95.9%**  
Fully Vaccinated: **95.9%**

Days since last community transmission **2**

#### Pfizer/BioNTech

Initiated: **36,810**  
Fully Vaccinated: **35,175**

#### Moderna

Initiated: **5,280**  
Fully Vaccinated: **5,025**

#### Janssen

Fully vaccinated: **1,117**

GUAM	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	19,899	189	20,088
Recovered	19,006	1	19,007
Active	619	189	808
Deaths	273	0	273

SAIPAN	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	3,334	58	3,392
Traced via Travel Screening	327	6	333
Traced via Community Screening	3,007	52	3,059
Deaths	18	0	18

Source: Joint Information Center - Guam, Commonwealth Healthcare Corp., <https://www.vaccinatecnmi.com/vax-dashboard/>

## 'Dems want to seize power for themselves'

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**  
ferdie\_delatorre@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

Insisting that he has done

nothing wrong and illegal as chief executive of the CNMI, Gov. Ralph DLG Torres said yesterday that the false alle-

gations brought by the House of Representatives Judiciary and Governmental Operations

**See DEMS on Page 4**

### RELATED NEWS

► Statement on House Impeachment Committee decision.  
**PAGE 8**



#### NEW DEPUTY MARSHAL

Rudynna Walker, center, was sworn in yesterday as the new deputy marshal of the Department of Public Safety on Tinian.

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR OF TINIAN AND AGUIGUAN

### CURRENT COVID-19 VACCINATIONS

41,317 Fully vaccinated



### INSIDE



#### BUSINESS

Kensington is starting the new year with a Flash Sale to celebrate 2022.

**PAGE 11**



#### NATION

Hundreds of people are stranded on the East Coast's main north-south highway in frigid weather.

**PAGE 12**



#### LIFE & STYLE

Jason Derulo was involved in a scuffle with two people early Tuesday at a Las Vegas Strip.

**PAGE 15**



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## Local

## ‘Excellent healthcare efforts behind low mortality numbers’

By JOSHUA SANTOS

joshua\_santos@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

For a jurisdiction that has managed to keep the COVID-19 pandemic at bay for so long, the deaths of 18 individuals who have passed away from COVID-19-related causes is tragic, said medical epidemiologist Dr. Ali Khan, but does not take away from the excellent public health and healthcare efforts that are being implemented here in the CNMI.

Speaking during a virtual media briefing on Monday, Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. chief executive officer Esther L. Muña also reminded everyone that there are people and loved ones behind the CNMI's 18 reported COVID-19-related deaths.

"I just want to remind everyone that behind these statistics, they are individuals, they are loved ones. We need to be respectful of that," said Muña.

Khan said the CNMI's

number of COVID-19-related deaths, which is currently at 18 since March 2020, represent "about one half of 1 percent of all cases." In terms of COVID-19 mortality rate, he said the CNMI's is right now at 38 deaths per 100,000 people.

The average age of the CNMI's COVID-19-related deaths was 65 years old; the youngest of these deaths was 43, and oldest 95.

Of the 15 deaths reported since Oct. 28, Khan said that

nine were unvaccinated, five were fully vaccinated, and one was partially vaccinated. None of the 15 received a booster shot.

To put the CNMI's numbers in context, Khan said the U.S. has thus far reported more than 824,000 COVID-19-related deaths, with deaths comprising 1.5% of all reported cases in the U.S., which Khan said is a three-times higher percentage than what is seen in the CNMI.

The U.S. COVID-19 mor-

tality rate is 250 deaths per 100,000 people, which Khan said is about eight times higher than the CNMI's rate.

Khan attributed the CNMI's ability to keep COVID-19-related deaths relatively low to the CNMI's public health and healthcare efforts.

"I believe this is a reflection of the excellent public health and healthcare efforts underway here in the community. The vaccination rate, for example, is quite excellent [as well as the] focus on public health and social measures," he said.

## Atalig working on ARPA premium pay for municipality's employees

Rota Mayor Efraim Atalig disclosed yesterday that he is working for the payment of premium pay for eligible municipality employees.

In an email to Sen. Teresita A. Santos (Ind-Rota), Atalig also stated that he is assigning a staff to follow up all pending claims for payments from vendors of the municipality.

Atalig shared his action in response to Santos' request yesterday to expeditiously begin releasing premium pay to all affected municipal employees using the American Rescue Plan Act funds allocated to the municipality.

"Our employees have been and continue to be dedicated to protecting and securing our borders," Santos

The senator also requested Atalig to pay some vendors in a timely manner to maintain and continue to build strong business relationship with them. She said some vendors have expressed concerns over the non-payment of services that have been rendered to the municipality.

Santos said municipal employees have worked tirelessly to provide public services since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

With Gov. Ralph DLG Torres' recent announcement of premium pay for select CNMI government employees, Santos said she has been inundated with phone calls from concerned municipal employees regarding their premium pay.

She said she was also informed that when the Torres

administration worked on the ARPA spending plan, the Rota municipality was provided with sufficient ARPA funds to include premium pay for municipal employees.

In his response yesterday, Atalig said he sent the list of employees eligible for the \$5,000 and \$1,000 premium pay to the Department of Finance on Saipan. Atalig said Finance on Saipan is responsible for printing the checks.

With respect to vendors, the mayor said he sent a staff to Saipan to follow up all the pending payments for all vendors, rather than to make phone calls to follow up.

The administration has expended \$3.6 million in ARPA funds for the first batch of premium pay for CNMI government employees who have worked directly to mitigate the COVID-19 and well as those government employees who have worked to provide services since the pandemic began.

The administration is also currently working on the payment of premium pay for front-liners and workers in the private sector who worked in the battle against the virus.

Government employees who have worked on the front lines at least 40 hours to directly mitigate the pandemic, will be receiving \$5,000 in premium pay/bonus. Government employees who have worked to provide essential public services during this pandemic will be getting \$1,000. (Ferdie De La Torre)



Atalig



Santos

» Mayor also sends staff to follow up payments for vendors

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## COMMUNITY BRIEFS

## NMC offices closed today, tomorrow

Northern Marianas College employees will be participating in professional development activities today, Jan. 6, and tomorrow, Jan. 7, 2022. To maximize employee participation, NMC offices will be closed on

these days. The college will resume normal business hours on Monday, Jan. 10, 2022.

Individuals who are seeking assistance for registering for the spring 2022 semester can email oar@marianas.edu. For all other matters, email nmc@marianas.edu. (PR)



## Man claims DPS officers arrested him unlawfully

By **KIMBERLY B. ESMORES**  
kimberly\_esmores@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

A man is accusing two Department of Public Safety Officers of arresting him unlawfully last year, depriving him of his civil rights.

Nicholas N. Yarolfalchuw, through attorney Joseph Horey, is suing in the U.S. District Court for the NMI Department of Public Safety police sergeant John Cabrera and DPS officer Daniel Fitial for alleged unlawful arrest.

Horey claims his client was deprived of his civil right and, as relief, wants the court to issue an order awarding him an unspecified amount of damages.

According to the complaint, on May 10, 2021 at approximately 5pm, Yarolfalchuw was sitting in a pavilion within his residence talking with relatives when Cabrera arrived and entered the premises, parking beside the pavilion. After a short discussion, Yarolfalchuw advised Cabrera that he was trespassing and told him to leave.

However, Horey said that Cabrera did not depart and, instead, allegedly used his DPS-issued vehicle to block the driveway that constituted the entrance to the premises.

The complaint said that soon after, Fitial arrived in another DPS vehicle and, under the direction of Cabrera, Fitial ordered Yarolfalchuw to place

his hands behind his back. Yarolfalchuw in handcuffs and Fitial then allegedly placed ordered the plaintiff to get into

Fitial's vehicle.

Yarolfalchuw claims that Fitial drove him to DPS headquarters where he was held

in custody for the rest of the day and was released at about 4pm the following day.

"At no time did defendants,

or either of them, have any warrant for either the search of the premises or the arrest of plaintiff," the complaint stated.

## 'We want to make sure we do this in the right way'

By **JOSHUA SANTOS**  
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REPORTER

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recently shortened the recommended isolation time for asymptomatic individuals with COVID-19 from 10 days to five. Will the CNMI make any changes to its protocols given the new CDC guidelines?

"Not at this time," said Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. chief executive officer Esther L. Muña during a virtual media briefing on Monday, taking into account the CNMI's current COVID-19 situation, the CNMI's vulnerable population, and the health care system's capacity.

Muña noted that many U.S. states and territories can act and have acted more conservatively than what the CDC recommends.

"At the end of the day, the states and territories can always be more conservative and have been more conservative than what CDC provides

See **WE** on Next Page

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KBB: \$19,496



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FORTE LX  
SALE PRICE  
**\$13,995**

• 73,102 MILES  
• STK: 16P363  
• KBB: \$14,632



2017 MAZDA  
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SPORT  
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• KBB: \$19,253



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KONA SPORT  
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• STK: 21H074A  
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• KBB: \$29,936



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• STK: 16R269  
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**\$27,995**

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2019 TOYOTA  
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LIMITED  
SALE PRICE  
**\$47,995**

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• STK: 19P384  
• KBB: \$50,433



2018 KIA  
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SALE PRICE  
**\$17,995**

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• STK: 18HS922  
• KBB: \$18,632



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## \$25K bail for woman who allegedly abetted boyfriend in homicide

By **KIMBERLY B. ESMORES**  
kimberly\_esmores@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

The Superior Court has imposed a \$25,000 cash bail on a woman accused of helping her boyfriend hide

a knife that is believed to have been used in a fatal stabbing on New Year's Day.

Following a bail hearing last Tuesday, Superior Court Associate Judge Wesley Bogdan imposed a \$25,000

cash bail on Yi Lyuqin who is accused of being an accessory to the stabbing death of Li SongZhi.

Yi was remanded back to Department of Corrections custody because she could not post bail and was or-

dered to return to court on Jan. 12 for a preliminary hearing at 10am. Her arraignment is set for Jan. 24, at 9am.

According to court documents, Yi was arrested at Paseo de Marianas on Jan. 1 for allegedly hiding the knife her boyfriend, Kong LingYang, reportedly used to stab Li to death.

During the on-scene investigation, a police officer noticed a female Asian, later identified as Yi, who appeared to have blood stains on the side of her chin.

She had allegedly returned to the crime scene in a different outfit after

police had already transported Kong to DOC. At this same time as her return, a DPS detective found a small, black folding knife behind a typhoon shutter attached to the westernmost unit adjacent to the Paris Croissant establishment. The knife was observed to be folded out with the blade exposed and with blood stains. Yi was arrested at around 3:02am and was transported to DOC for booking and detention.

A longer version of this story is available at [www.saipantribune.com](http://www.saipantribune.com)

## Man initially accused of rape is released after pleading guilty to disturbing the peace

By **KIMBERLY B. ESMORES**  
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REPORTER

The Superior Court has accepted the plea agreement of a 19-year-old man who was initially accused of rape but whose charges were later amended and reduced to just disturbing the peace.

Following a change of plea hearing yesterday, John Timothy Vergara, 19, was absolved of all sexually related charges initially filed against him, and was sentenced to a six-month imprisonment term for disturbing the peace after offering a guilty plea. Of the six months, Vergara was only ordered to serve four days and was

given credit for the four days he had already served.

Vergara was placed on two years of probation following his hearing yesterday. He was also allowed to continue attending church services as long as he does not engage with or have contact with the victim or the victim's family while at these activities.

During the hearing, Superior Court Associate Judge Joseph Camacho raised concerns about the plea agreement, including whether the family of the 13-year-old was on board with the decision, why there was no mandatory sentence for Vergara since there was language in the plea agree-

ment that insinuated sexual abuse, and why Vergara was not required to register as a sex offender.

However, both the defense, led by Office of the Public Defender's JP Nogues, and the prosecution, led by Office of the Attorney General's James Houston, informed the court that the victim and her mother agreed with the terms of the plea agreement and both wanted the case closed as quickly as possible so they could move on with their lives.

A longer version of this story is available at [www.saipantribune.com](http://www.saipantribune.com)

## CNMI sees first gas price increase of 2022

By **KIMBERLY B. ESMORES**  
kimberly\_esmores@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

After weeks of continuous rollbacks in fuel prices, the CNMI saw its first price adjustment of the year, with gas prices up 15 cents.

Late afternoon yesterday, Mobil Oil Marianas took the lead with a 15-cent increase in fuel prices.

Mobil's Extra fuel went up from \$4.81 a gallon yesterday to \$4.96. Mobil also hiked its Supreme fuel from \$5.26 to \$5.41 a gallon while its diesel increased from \$5.08 a gallon to \$5.23.

Shell Marianas has yet to increase

its prices as of 7pm press time but both oil companies typically mirror each other's price changes, so Shell is expected to impose the same increase today.

According to a local driver, she said the increase really sets the tone for fuel prices in 2022.

"People may disagree but I'm sure this really has set the tone for 2022. I'm sure we're bound to see a steady increase from here on out after the brief period of relief when fuel prices went down. That's just my opinion," she said.

Another driver, a 32-year-old

male, said the year has really started off bad and the increase in fuel prices just proved that.

"Can you imagine, we started the year with multiple COVID-19 deaths, a stabbing that ended with a man dead. The increase in gas prices is just the icing on top. The year just didn't start right to begin with," he said.

A gas attendant said its standard for fuel to increase around this time of year.

"It usually happens around this time with people returning to work after the holidays, which means people are back on the road. It's always been like this," he said.

cited worries about the increasing number of omicron cases in Korea.

Back in October, MVA had expected to serve roughly 7,794 TRIP participants through the end of the 2021 via the South Korean travel bubble program. However, MVA deputy managing director Judy Torres said that, as of December, the CNMI had only served roughly a total of 4,834 TRIP participants from October to Dec. 16.

According to Torres' breakdown of the 4,834 TRIP participants, the CNMI had a total of 1,983 participants in October, 2,121 in November, and 730 TRIP participants from Dec. 1 to 16.

chives, the success of the CNMI's Tourism Resumption Investment Plan had prodded Air Seoul and Air Busan to express an interest in flying to Saipan. However, since proposing to launch around December back in October of 2021, there has been no word from both airlines whether they will push forward with adding Saipan to their scheduled routes.

Lately, about 27% of TRIP bookings have either canceled or postponed their trip to the CNMI. That is roughly over 2,000 cancellations based on the projected number of TRIP participants MVA reported back in October. Most cancellations

tered on Jan. 4, bringing the CNMI's vaccination rate to 95.7%. It further went up to 97.9% late afternoon yesterday. Registering to receive vaccines and booster shots if eligible can be done through [vaccinatecnmi.com](http://vaccinatecnmi.com).

CHCC also recently posted on social media that it has run out of Pfizer vaccines for children aged 5-11. Separately, *Saipan Tribune* confirmed with CHCC public information officer Guillermo Lifofoi that a new shipment is expected to arrive this Saturday, Jan. 8.

*Saipan Tribune* inquired how many doses are included in the next shipment, but was unable to receive a response as of press time.

CHCC reported that 577 COVID-19 tests were conducted on Jan. 3, com-

prising travel and surveillance testing but not including Department of Fire & Emergency Medical Services' antigen testing. Registering for community-based testing can be done through <https://covidtesting.chcc.health>.

For those wishing to learn more about how to protect you and your families safe from COVID-19, CHCC asks the community to visit <https://www.staysafecnmi.com/live-covidsafe/>. The website has links to a COVID-19 guidebook, a "10 things" graphic depicting at-home COVID-19 symptom management methods, up-to-date CNMI entry and quarantine protocols, additional information sources, and contact information for those with more questions/ concerns.

## DEMS

From Page 1

Committee's against him and his family are nothing more than a politically charged group of Democrats conspiring to sensationalize misleading information so that they may divide the community and seize power for themselves.

"No illegal activity has been proven," said Torres in a strongly-worded statement he issued soon after the House Special Investigating Committee on Impeachment unanimously voted Tuesday to send a House resolution to impeach him to the full House for action.

As this developed, House Speaker Edmund S. Villagomez (Ind-Saipan) said yesterday that he had called for a full House session this coming Wednesday, during which they will be acting on House Resolution 22-14 that impeaches Torres for alleged commission of felonies, corruption, and negligence. It was Judiciary and Governmental Operations Committee chair Rep. Celina R. Babauta (D-Saipan) who filed the resolution.

Torres thanked the Republican mi-

nority members of the Committee on Impeachment for voting to advance the Articles of Impeachment to the full House body for final disposition, describing the move as "one step closer to a fair and balanced hearing" in the Senate where, if invited, he said he intends to address each allegation so that he may prove that he has done nothing wrong.

The governor said the only thing that the JGO has proven is that they are anything but judicious in their ways.

Torres said the JGO's actions have shown that Babauta and her two "legislative bullies" lack the experience and education in public policy, etiquette, and rule of law to faithfully discharge their duties of oversight, advice, and consent.

"They are, in effect, a tainted committee driven by alleged lawbreakers whose registered complaints against them are heinous crimes much more severe than the false allegations of excessive travel and charges for utilities brought against me," the governor said.

A longer version of this story is available at [www.saipantribune.com](http://www.saipantribune.com)

## S. KOREA

From Page 1

cided to cease its Busan-Saipan route come Jan. 12 despite having just recently resumed the service.

In a brief statement, Marianas Visitors Authority managing director Priscilla Iakopo said. Air Busan and Air Seoul, two South Korea-based airlines that have also shown an interest in servicing the Saipan route, have gone quiet as they monitor travel trends as a result of the growing omicron variant.

According to *Saipan Tribune* ar-

## 58

From Page 1

travel testing. CHCC added that the vaccination statuses of the 58 were pending verification as of Tuesday night.

As of Jan. 4, CHCC reported that there were 13 individuals hospitalized as a result of COVID-19: seven are unvaccinated, five vaccinated, and one partially vaccinated. Two individuals are on a ventilator, and one has been discharged.

As of Dec. 28, CHCC also reported that there have been 2,498 recoveries and 588 active cases since Oct. 28.

CHCC reported that 360 COVID-19 vaccine shots were adminis-

## WE

From Page 3

as guidelines. Considering our situation here in the CNMI where there is widespread transmission, as well as our sick population [and] many with comorbidities, we want to make sure that we do this in the right way," said Muña.

She said CHCC is currently on a "contingency response" and that "we

are doing our very best to make sure that our healthcare system is able to manage the current situation." She added that making changes to the CNMI's current quarantine protocols may put the healthcare system's capacity more at risk.

"[Putting] more risk to our capacity would be not very wise at this time, so right now we would like to maintain our current quarantine protocols," she added.





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# Commonwealth Utilities Corporation



## JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

**JVA No. 22 – 006**  
**REANNOUNCEMENT**

**Opening Date: January 5, 2022**  
**Closing Date: January 19, 2022**

<p><b>POSITION TITLE:</b> <b>DEPARTMENT:</b> <b>LOCATION:</b> <b>ANNUAL SALARY:</b> <b>CONTRACT:</b> <b>POSITION(S):</b></p>	<p><b>Safety Technician</b> <b>COA/Safety Office Division</b> <b>Saipan, Northern Marianas Islands, USA</b> <b>\$20,826.00 - \$28,115.00 per annum, Non - Exempt</b> <b>Not Contracted</b> <b>Two (2)</b></p>
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The incumbent will be under the direct supervision of the Chief of Administration or his/her designee.

**Duties:**

- Assists with facility and site inspections to review and monitor compliance with safety and environmental regulations and standards; prepares and issues citations for corrective actions to address compliance violations.
- Responds to incidents and emergencies and assists with ensuring compliance with laws, rules and regulations; follows up to ensure issues are resolved and procedures are followed.
- Prepares incident and accident reports to document issues and corrective actions.
- Monitors equipment and supplies inventory; requests replacement stock to replenish inventory levels; ensures stock supply and preparedness for responding to oil spills or related incidents.
- Conducts or assists with a variety of informational workshops and/or orientations.
- Reviews project specifications and monitors field project work as needed.
- Performs other duties of a similar nature and level as assigned.

**Minimum Requirements:**  
Education: High School Diploma or GED or ABE Program AS and based on assignment, up to 2 years of related work experience.

Knowledge of: Applicable Federal, Commonwealth and local laws, codes, regulations and/or ordinances; Investigative techniques; Mitigation procedures; Safe work practices and procedures; Customer service principles; Modern office technology.

Skills in: Interpreting and applying applicable laws, codes, regulations and standards; Performing inspections to monitor safety and environmental compliance; Responding to emergency incidents to ensure corrective actions and proper procedures are followed; Monitoring equipment and supply inventory; Conducting and assisting with informational workshops and orientations; Reviewing project specifications and monitoring project work; Providing customer service; Preparing reports and related activity documentation; Utilizing a computer and relevant software applications; Utilizing communication and interpersonal skills as applied to interaction with coworkers, supervisor, the general public, and others to sufficiently exchange or convey information and to receive work direction.

**Licensing:**

- Valid CNMI Driver's License with appropriate class.
- Hazmat and OSHA Certifications (Position may require)

All applicants may be tested and all applicants are subject to pre-employment drug test.

**How to Apply:** Submit a completed CUC Employment Application, resume, and applicable supporting documents to the CUC Human Resources office located on the 3rd Floor of the Joeten Dandan Building on Saipan, from Monday to Friday (Except Legal Holidays), 7:30 am – 4:30 pm. Applicants on the island of Tinian and Rota may submit their documents to their respective CUC Administration office. Application, resume and supporting documents can also be e-mailed to: employment.applications@cucgov.org

**P. O. Box 501220, Third Floor, Joeten Dandan Building, Saipan, MP 96950**  
**Tel: (670) 664-4282 • Fax: (670) 235-5131**  
**CUC is an Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer.**

# 'OPA lacks authority to hear administrative appeals'

The CNMI Supreme Court has determined that the CNMI Constitution and relevant laws do not grant the Office of the Public Auditor the authority to hear administrative appeals in procurement disputes.

In an opinion issued on Dec. 30, 2021, the high court pointed out that OPA's main power under the Constitution Article 3, Section 12 and the Commonwealth Auditing Act of 1983, is auditing the receipt, possession, and disbursement of public funds, including government procurement. It said the Legislature has given OPA additional powers, such as the ability to assist agencies in implementing policies, but did not grant the specific authority to hear administrative appeals, which requires an impartial adjudicator between two opposing parties.

The Supreme Court opinion is related to the *In Re Decision of the Office of the Public Auditor on the Administrative Appeal of GPPC*. The case concerned a Commonwealth Utilities Corp. procurement appeal between two companies, GPPC and RNV Construction. A CUC regulation designates the OPA to hear appeals from CUC's final procurement decisions. After OPA overruled CUC and awarded a construction contract to GPPC,

RNV Construction challenged its authority to hear CUC procurement appeals. The Supreme Court effectively sided with RNV Construction, saying the NMI Constitution and relevant laws do not grant OPA the authority to hear appeals from agencies like CUC.

The Supreme Court also found a CUC regulation—NMIAC § 50-50-405—invalid. "Agencies cannot delegate their authority to other agencies without clear legislative action, which was absent in this case. CUC is responsible for managing its procurement. Thus, the regulation improperly gave OPA the ability to overrule CUC's final procurement decisions," the high court opinion stated.

The Commonwealth Healthcare Corp., Northern Marianas Housing Corp., and Northern Marianas College also have similar provisions in their regulations designating OPA to hear procurement decision appeals.

The Supreme Court's full opinion is available at [www.cnmilaw.org](http://www.cnmilaw.org). **(PR)**

Sukesh Chandra Barman  
285-2877  
Pro Se

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF  
THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE  
NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS**

In Re )  
the Matter )  
of Petition )  
to Correct: )  
Sukesh )  
Chandra )  
Barman )  
Petitioner )

FCD CN  
CIVIL ACTION  
NO. 21-0515

**NOTICE OF  
HEARING**

Notice is hereby given that the above-entitled matter is set for a hearing on April 11, 2022, at 9:00 a.m. in Courtroom 217A, before Associate Judge Teresa Kim-Tenorio.


Dated this 17th day of December, 2021.

Patrick V. Diaz  
Clerk of Court

/s/ By: Deputy Clerk of Court


## Water outage on Middle Road

Commonwealth Utilities Corp. customers along the northbound lane in Middle Road experienced an emergency water service interruption yesterday due to a leak repair across Bank of Ha-waii in Middle Road. CUC expected to finish repairing the leak at 4:30pm yesterday. The outage affected CUC's water customers from Korea Hardware to Safety 1st Systems. **(PR)**



# Commonwealth Utilities Corporation

## Office of the Executive Director



## INVITATION FOR BIDS

### CUC-IFB-22-013

### Lower Base Sewer Phase 2 – Gravity Mains

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed bids from qualified firms for the Lower Base Sewer Phase 2 – Gravity Mains in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The intent of the contract is for the Contractor to provide all labor, equipment, supplies and materials necessary to complete the scope of work which consists of the installation of sewer gravity mains, manholes, sewer laterals and connections to the new sewer system, connection to the existing sewer on Isa Drive, concrete encasement of new sewer mains, utility crossings, restoration of site pavement, temporary soil erosion control, temporary traffic control, and other related work. The work shall be done in accordance with the Project Plans and Specifications and without disruption to the daily operation of the sewer and water system. CUC requires the Project to be completed in **365 calendar days** from date of award of contract.

*The project is funded by a grant from the United States of Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). The award of this project is contingent upon receipt of approval for project award from USEPA.*

Prospective Bidders must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The Bid Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of **\$200.00** (non-refundable) for one IFB package set.

A Pre-Bid Conference followed by site visits will be held on **January 12, 2022 at 10:00 AM (ChST)** at the CUC Main Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Room No.17, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building.

**One (1) original and Five (5) copies** of the bid must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "**CUC-IFB-22-013, Lower Base Sewer Phase 2 – Gravity Mains**" to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on February 1, 2022**, at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Bids mailed via postal or courier service must be received on or before due date and time or post-marked before due date and time. Bid shall be submitted on the provided Bid Forms. Bidders are required to complete all Bid Forms. Bidders may supplement this form as appropriate. Bids will be required to be submitted under a condition of irrevocability for a period of 60 days after submission. Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered.

A Bid Guarantee of not less than fifteen (15%) percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. A Payment Bond of one Hundred (100%) percent and a Performance Bond of one hundred (100%) of the total bid price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful bidders. The payment and Performance bond must be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). *Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.*

Bidders are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations.


This Invitation for Bids does not commit CUC to the award of a contract or contracts, nor to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of bids in anticipation of a contract. Bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid under the contract.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from registered Proponents and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 a.m. (ChST) on January 18, 2022** to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrator via email address [manny.sablan@cucgov.org](mailto:manny.sablan@cucgov.org) with a copy to Nicolette Villagomez, CUC Water/Wastewater Engineer via email address [nicolette.villagomez@cucgov.org](mailto:nicolette.villagomez@cucgov.org) and to Christie Sablan, P&S, Senior Administrative Technician – [christie.sablan@cucgov.org](mailto:christie.sablan@cucgov.org).


CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids and waive any imperfection in the bid proposal in the best interest of the government. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO  
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN  
Purchasing Administrator



# Commonwealth Utilities Corporation



## REQUEST FOR ARCHITECTURAL AND ENGINEERING SERVICES

### CUC-RAESP-22-002

### A&E SURVEY SERVICES FOR THE DANDAN HOMESTEAD WATERLINE AND SERVICE LATERAL REPLACEMENT (W20-074)

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed proposals from qualified Architectural and Engineering (A&E) firms for the Survey Services of the DanDan Homestead Waterline and Service Lateral Replacement in DanDan, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

*This project is funded by a grant from the United States of Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). The award of this contract is contingent upon receipt of the approval for project award from USEPA.*

Prospective Proposers for this RAESP must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The RAESP package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government-observed holidays upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section by cash, check or credit card in the amount of \$100.00 (non-refundable) for one RAESP package set.

A Pre-Bid Conference followed by site visits will be held on **January 19, 2022 at 10:00 AM (ChST)** at the CUC Main Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Room No.17, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building.

**One (1) original and Five (5) hard copies of the Proposal and One (1) original and Five (5) hard copies of the Cost Proposal in a separate envelope** must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "**CUC-RAESP-22-002, A&E Survey Services for DanDan Homestead Waterline and Service Lateral Replacement**", to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on February 8, 2022**. Late submissions and conditional proposals will not be considered.

Discussions may be conducted with responsible proposers who submit proposal determined to be reasonably susceptible of being selected for award for the purpose of clarification and to ensure full understanding of and responsiveness to solicitation requirements. All proposers shall be accorded fair and equal treatment with respect to any opportunity for discussion. During discussions, there will be no disclosure of any information derived from the proposal submitted by competing proposers.

All proposers are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the proposers due to lack of information or understanding of the proposal requirements in the course of Consultant's preparation of a proposal under the contract. The RAESP does not commit CUC to award a contract, to pay any cost incurred in the preparation of the statement of qualifications under this request, or to procure or contract for services. Consultants are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This RAESP and the ensuing contract shall be executed as per the CUC Procurement Regulations.

All questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from pre-registered prospective proposers and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on January 24, 2022** to Mr. Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrator, via email – [manny.sablan@cucgov.org](mailto:manny.sablan@cucgov.org) with a copy to Mr. Larry Manacop, CUC Water/Wastewater, Acting Chief Engineer – via email [larry.manacop@cucgov.org](mailto:larry.manacop@cucgov.org); Mr. Kennet Jann R. Bernardo, CUC Water/Wastewater Engineer – via email [kennet.bernardo@cucgov.org](mailto:kennet.bernardo@cucgov.org) and Ms. Christie L. Sablan, Procurement & Supply, Administrative Technician Senior – via email [christie.sablan@cucgov.org](mailto:christie.sablan@cucgov.org).

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and waive any imperfection in the proposal in the best interest of the government. All proposals shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO  
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN  
Purchasing Administrator



## Case on birthright citizenship in US territories heads to Supreme Court

Plaintiffs in *Fitisemanu v. United States* will take their case to the Supreme Court of the United States after the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 10th Circuit denied their petition for review by the full court earlier this week. Notably, Judges Robert Bacharach and Nancy Moritz dissented to the denial of review in a lengthy and scholarly opinion setting forth the constitutional basis for recognizing a right to citizenship for people born in U.S. territories, and the “exceptional importance” of this case. The *Fitisemanu* plaintiffs had initially prevailed in their case, with Judge Clark Waddoups ruling at the district court level that Congress did not have the power to deny citizenship to individuals born in U.S. territories. On appeal, a divided panel of the 10th Circuit reversed 2-1, with each judge writing a separate opinion.

“It’s rare to see a 27-page dissent to the denial of full court review, which helps show how important it is for the Supreme Court to finally answer whether people born in U.S. territories have a constitutional right to citizenship,

or if Congress can extend or restrict citizenship at will,” said Neil Weare, president and founder of Equally American, which represents the *Fitisemanu* plaintiffs and advocates for equality and civil rights for the 3.5 million residents of U.S. territories. “The dissenting judges were quick to point out the ‘exceptional importance’ of this case, and we hope that the Supreme Court will take up and answer this question.”

“I was born on U.S. soil, have a U.S. passport, and pay thousands of dollars in taxes a year to the federal government. But based on a discriminatory federal law, I am denied recognition as a U.S. citizen. As a result, I cannot vote in state, federal, or even local elections, and I’m ineligible for many state and federal jobs. This isn’t just wrong, it’s unconstitutional,” said John Fitisemanu, who was born in American Samoa and for the past 20 years has lived in Utah. “If I have to take my case to the Supreme Court to be treated as a full and equal citizen, then that’s what I’m going to do.”

“American Samoa’s tradi-

tional leaders who transferred sovereignty over the islands to the United States had very good reason to believe that after this event anyone born in American Samoa were citizens of the United States,” said Charles Ala’ilima, an American Samoan attorney who also represents the *Fitisemanu* plaintiffs. “As noted by the two dissenting federal judges, the constitutional issues here are of great significance not just to American Samoans but to all the territories because Congress is purporting to deny a constitutional right to citizenship to people born in these areas despite their birth on sovereign U.S. soil.”

In a September filing, the U.S. Department of Justice argued against birthright citizenship for people born in U.S. territories by relying heavily on the controversial *Insular Cases*, which leading legal scholars like professor Sanford Levinson have called “central documents in the history of American racism.” This comes after the Supreme Court reiterated last year that the *Insular Cases* “should not be further extended.” And in November, Justice Neil Gorsuch repeatedly pressed the Justice Department at oral argument in *U.S. v. Vaello-Madero*, “Why shouldn’t we just admit the *Insular Cases* were

incorrectly decided?” Members of Congress have also called on DOJ to condemn the *Insular Cases*, and Congress is currently considering House Resolution 279, which rejects the *Insular Cases* and the racial views they espoused.

The American Samoan government has joined federal defendants in arguing that the question of citizenship in the territories is up to Congress. Meanwhile, current and former elected officials from Puerto Rico, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Northern Mariana Islands have argued as “friends of the court” in the case that individuals born in the territories

have a constitutional right to citizenship.

The *Fitisemanu* plaintiffs have 90 days from the 10th Circuit’s ruling to file their petition to the U.S. Supreme Court. A decision by the Supreme Court on whether to take the case is expected in 2022.

More information about *Fitisemanu v. United States*, including court filings and orders, is available at <https://www.equalrightsnw.org/fitisemanu>. An FAQ addressing concerns about the case raised by American Samoan elected officials is available at [https://www.equalrightsnw.org/citizenship\\_faqs](https://www.equalrightsnw.org/citizenship_faqs) (PR)

## DeLeon Guerrero urges DPW to prioritize 5 remaining funded community projects

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**  
ferdie\_delatorre@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

Sen. Edith E. DeLeon Guerrero (D-Saipan) urged Public Works Secretary James Ada yesterday to prioritize five remaining community projects that were funded through a Saipan local law that has been in effect since 2019.

DeLeon Guerrero, who chairs the Saipan and Northern Islands Legislative Delegation’s Judiciary and Governmental Operations Committee, told Ada in an email that she is hopeful that the remaining funded projects will receive DPW’s prioritized attention for the entire island community, most especially children to enjoy.

The senators revisited her prior inquiry on Saipan Local Law 21-7 that appropriated \$126,670 for various community projects.

She said under that law, which took effect on Sept. 12, 2019, the funds shall not be reprogrammed for any other purpose and without fiscal year limitation.

DeLeon Guerrero said Ada informed her office in a letter dated Aug. 12, 2021, that one from the list of six identified funded projects under SL 21-7 had already been completed, referring to the repair and maintenance of youth

centers and basketball courts in Precinct 1.

Precinct 1 covers San Vicente, Dandan, parts of Fina Sisu, Koblerville, San Antonio, As Lito, parts of As Perdito, Chalan Piao, Afetnas, and As Gonno.

DeLeon Guerrero said Ada informed her that \$23,603 was spent for that one completed project, including \$6,333 in administrative cost.

The senator said this means that since September 2019 when the law took effect, there are still five remaining projects: to repair the perimeter fence of the Dandan Softball Field; to construct pavilions and a restroom at the San Antonio Beach; for the repair and maintenance of Pakpak Beach Park facilities, and for the architecture and engineering design of a sidewalk beginning at Coral Ocean Point to the intersection of Chalan Piao and Beach Road.

House Local Bill 21-5,D1 had appropriated \$126,670 of the Earned Bond Interest Income collected for Saipan that has been identified by the Commonwealth Development Authority as available for appropriation to repair, enhance, and maintain public facilities in Precinct 1. That bill later became Saipan Local Law 21-7.

## WANTED!

Are you interested in ocean conservation activities and the preservation of culture?  
**Do you have a passion for communications?**  
If you are passionate about community development and have an entrepreneurial spirit, then this might just be the job you’ve been dreaming about but thought too good to be true!

### Communications Manager Part-time

The successful candidate will have a bachelor’s degree in journalism, public relations, communications, marketing, or related field plus a minimum of 5 years of relevant experience. You will have significant experience working with multiple forms of media and membership services. You likely have experience starting a business, civic club, or project from the ground up. Your job will be overseeing, executing, and managing communications for the organization and several of our projects as well as developing and implementing organizational strategies. You will know the importance of deadlines and be responsible for developing, managing, and implementing multiple task schedules.

**Requirements** – A passion for our mission to help educate everyone in our community learn about ocean and marine science and the urgent need to care for our precious resources.

Excellent communications skills and superb organizational skills. Others would say that you have a positive “can-do” attitude and that you were their favorite, productive team player. You will be able to demonstrate proven experience with self-motivation and the ability to work without supervision.

You are not asking what to do next but devising ways to accomplish goals in a manner that the Executive Director can approve of easily.



If you are interested, send an email to [info@friendsmarianatrench.org](mailto:info@friendsmarianatrench.org) with the subject line “Comms Manager”. Indicate why you are interested and attach your resume. Also include three references and their contact info. Preference given to individuals who are fluent in Chamorro and/or Carolinian languages. This position is funded by a grant from the David and Lucile Packard Foundation.



### NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION (NMHC)

Community Development Block Grant - Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) Program

## JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

NMHC JVA NO.	Positions:	Salary:	Opening Date	Closing Date
2021-041	CDBG-DR Internal Auditor (1-Position) RE-ANNOUNCEMENT	UNGRADED \$50,000.00 to \$60,000.00 per annum	Dec. 08, 2021	Jan. 07, 2022 4:00 PM

Employment application form, detailed job description, qualification requirements and other information can be accessed at [www.nmhcgov.net](http://www.nmhcgov.net) and [www.cnmi-cdbgdr.com](http://www.cnmi-cdbgdr.com).

Applicants may submit their applications through the following options: Submission at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan; Drop Box located in front of the NMHC Central Office building; the CDBG-DR Office located on the 3rd Floor of the Ladera Building, Chalan Laulau, Beach Road; or email application and documents to [officemanager@nmhcgov.net](mailto:officemanager@nmhcgov.net).

All applicants must complete and submit the NMHC Employment Application Form together with required documents that are listed in the Employment Application Package. Failure to provide the required documents will result in automatic disqualification. NMHC and all its properties are drug-free zones; therefore, selected applicant will be subject to pre-employment drug screening.

It is the policy of the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) that the merit system will be applied and administered according to the principle of equal opportunity for all citizens and nationals as defined by its personnel regulations and the Northern Marianas Commonwealth Constitution regardless of age, race, sex, religion, political affiliation or belief, marital status, disability or place of origin.

For inquiries, please contact Mr. Jacob Muna, Office Manager, at (670) 234-6866/9447 or by email to [officemanager@nmhcgov.net](mailto:officemanager@nmhcgov.net). NMHC is a fair housing agency and an equal opportunity provider, lender and employer.

/s/

**JESSE S. PALACIOS**  
Corporate Director



### COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY

Main Office: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT  
P.O. BOX 501055 • SAIPAN • MP 96950-1055  
Phone: (670) 237-6500 Fax: (670) 234-5962  
E-Mail Address: [cpa.admin@pticom.com](mailto:cpa.admin@pticom.com) • Website: [www.cnmiports.com](http://www.cnmiports.com)

### JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT # 06-2021

Opening date: December 17, 2021 Closing date: January 07, 2022

**Positions:**  
**SAIPAN:**  
(1) Baggage Handling Systems (BHS) Technician  
(1) General Maintenance I  
(1) Ports Police Officer I

**ROTA:**  
(1) Maintenance/Custodial-I (CPA Rota)  
(1) AOA Controller/Ground Maintenance I

**TINIAN:**  
(1) General Maintenance I  
(1) AOA Controller/Ground Maintenance

Employment Application must be accompanied with a copy of all required diploma/certificates and/or official sealed transcripts, original copy of recent police record not more than six (6) months old, original copy of U.S. Department of Defense Form DD214 for retired members or veterans of our Armed Forces, and other documents as required for the position. Public Law 111-70 requires that all male applicants age 18 to 25 years old must submit documentation evidencing his registration with the Federal Selective Service System. All applications and required documents must be submitted to the **CPA Administration Office, 2nd Floor Arrival Building, Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport or CPA Administration Office Tinian International Airport or Benjamin Taisacan Manglona International Airport**. Failure to provide any of the required documents will result in automatic disqualification. Certain vacancies may require written and/or physical test. Selected applicants will be subjected to pre-employment drug screening, 10-year Criminal History Record Check and 49 CFR Part 1542.209(d) Requirements. CPA reserves the right to waive or implement other qualifications to meet its needs. The deadline for submission of applications and required documents to the CPA Administration Office (Saipan) or at the Tinian International Airport or Benjamin Taisacan Manglona International Airport is no later than **5:00 P.M. on Friday, January 7, 2022**.

Detailed information on qualifications and position descriptions for the above positions may be picked up along with the application form from Monday-Friday, 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M., except on holidays, at the CPA Administration Office (2nd Floor) of the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, Arrival Terminal or CPA Admin. Office at the Tinian International Airport or at the Benjamin Taisacan Manglona International Airport. For additional information, please contact the CPA Human Resources Office by email at [lorna.tenorio@cnmiports.com](mailto:lorna.tenorio@cnmiports.com) or by phone at (670)237-6500.

CPA is an Equal Opportunity Employer and CPA hires those who are legally entitled to employment in the CNMI.

CHRISTOPHER S. TENORIO  
Executive Director



### COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANAS ISLANDS NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION

## Public Notice

This Notice is paid by NMHC with HUD funds  
01/06/2022

### Early Notice and Public Review of a Proposed Activity in a 100-Year Floodplain

This is to give notice that **Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC)** as determined that the following proposed **Beach Road Improvement Phase III & IV project** under the **Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) program grant number B-19-DV-69-0001 and B-19-DV-69-002** is located in the **100-year floodplain**. NMHC will be identifying and evaluating practicable alternatives to locating the action in the **floodplain** and the potential impacts on the floodplain from the proposed action, as required by **Executive Order 11988**, in accordance with HUD regulations at 24 CFR 55.20 Subpart C Procedures for Making Determinations on Floodplain Management and Protection of Wetlands. The proposed project(s) is located on **Route 33, Beach Road, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands**.

The public may view the full description of the project and provide comments by visiting the NMHC website at [www.nmhcgov.net](http://www.nmhcgov.net) by clicking on the public notice/announcement tab and selecting the Environmental Review Records or you may visit the NMHC CDBG-DR website at <http://www.cnmicdbgdr.com>.

Written comments must be received by NMHC on or before January 24, 2022. A minimum 15 calendar day comment period will begin the day after the publication and end on the 16th day after the publication. Written comments may also be submitted through the following methods: email at [nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp](mailto:nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp); or facsimile to 1-670-234-9021; or hand deliver to the NMHC Central Office located in Garapan, Saipan, Attention CDBG-DR Project Division.

/s/

Ralph DLG. Torres  
Governor, CNMI



# Opinion

## Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER  
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## EDITORIAL

### Talk of civil war moves beyond theoretical as distrust of elections grows

In perhaps the saddest statement since Jan. 6 on the state of American Democracy, Republican lawmakers across the country have been asked to say three simple words: Joe. Biden. Won.

But they just can't bring themselves to do it, even though Biden beat President Donald Trump by more than 7 million popular votes and trounced him in the Electoral College toll. In other words, those GOP lawmakers refuse to recognize the will of the people. Which means they no longer recognize democracy.

An October poll found that nearly a third of Republican respondents said violence may be necessary to put Trump back in power. Which means those Republicans no longer recognize democracy as the only correct way to install leaders and peacefully transfer power. Sales of firearms in America are skyrocketing. Forbes reports that more than 30 million guns were purchased in America in 2020 and 2021, a record-setting trend that suggests some people are preparing for violence.

These are frightening times for anyone paying attention to the trends. The storming of the Capitol on Jan. 6 was the starkest example of a willingness to use violence to achieve what a free election couldn't. Before insurrectionists attacked from the outside, a few members of Congress inside had forwarded to the White House an elaborate scheme to effectively stage a military-backed coup to keep Trump in power.

The scheme, outlined in a 36-slide PowerPoint presentation, concocted a story of electronically cast votes manipulated by China to tilt the vote toward Biden. The scheme called for nullifying all votes cast electronically. Trump would declare a state of emergency and federalize the National Guard in all 50 states to conduct a new presidential vote. Only paper ballots would be counted, and ballots deemed "counterfeit" would be thrown out. The result, the PowerPoint document states: "Trump wins!!"

But it required Vice President Mike Pence on Jan. 6 to refuse certification of Biden's victory. Pence said he wouldn't cooperate, prompting Trump to tweet during the insurrection: "Mike Pence didn't have the courage to do what should have been done to protect our Country and our Constitution."

Active-duty members of the U.S. military participated in the Jan. 6 assault. Months later, the commanding general of the Oklahoma National Guard publicly questioned a directive from his commander in chief.

As three retired generals wrote on our Dec. 24 op-ed page, there are troubling signs of a split in the U.S. military, with political loyalties eclipsing troops' oath to honor and protect the Constitution. "Under such a scenario, it is not outlandish to say a military breakdown could lead to civil war," the generals wrote.

See TALK on Next Page



### Statement on House Impeachment Committee decision

Governor Ralph DLG Torres issued the following statement in response to the House Special Investigating Committee on Impeachment's vote to send House Resolution 22-14 to the full House for action.

First, I want to thank the Republican minority members for voting to advance the Articles of Impeachment out of the committee and onto the full body for final disposition. This is one step closer to a fair and balanced hearing in the Senate where, if invited, I intend to address each allegation so that I may prove, once and for all before an elected body, that I have done nothing wrong in my capacity as chief executive of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Second, by allowing me equal time to respond and ask questions of those conducting the hearing in the Senate, I will be in a position to affirm that there is ample legal precedent and supporting policy for each of the actions I have taken as governor.

The false allegations put out by the JGO are nothing more than a politically charged group of Democrats conspiring to sensationalize misleading information so that they may divide our community and seize power for themselves. No illegal activity has been proven.

The only thing that the House of Representatives

Committee on Judiciary and Governmental Operations has proven is this: that they are anything but judicious in their ways. Their actions have shown that the chair of that committee and her two legislative bullies lack the experience and education in public policy, etiquette, and rule of law to faithfully discharge their duties of oversight, advice, and consent. They are, in effect, a tainted committee driven by alleged law breakers whose registered complaints against them are of heinous crimes much more severe than the false allegations of excessive travel and charges for utilities brought against me.

Again, I still do not understand how someone with allegations of sexual misconduct involving underaged women, an alleged attacker (whose assault was allegedly committed using a deadly weapon and in front of a special needs child), in collaboration with an alleged complicit animal rights violator, and a Democrat gubernatorial candidate could stand upright and conduct an investigation upon me when they themselves are being investigated. Rep. Tina Sablan is a declared candidate for governor, yet she chooses

By **RALPH DLG TORRES**  
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Ralph DLG Torres is governor of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.



to remain on a panel whose duty it is to conduct fair and unbiased hearings on allegations of wrongdoing. Is a Democrat candidate running for governor capable of conducting an unbiased and impartial hearing against a sitting Republican governor?

All four JGO members mentioned above demonstrated that they lack the integrity and character to lead a fair and impartial hearing.

Moving forward, should the Articles of Impeachment pass the House and advance to the Senate, I'll prove, again, that none of the false allegations brought against me are illegal or outside the scope of my authority as governor.

Finally, the JGO's one-sided political show comes to an end. The three legislative lawbreaking bullies

and their tainted Democrat leader will no longer have a platform to divide our government, mislead our people, and needlessly spend hundreds of thousands of dollars of public resources on attorney's fees as well as staff time and effort.

Should the Articles of Impeachment pass the House, I trust that the Senate proceedings will be conducted transparently, with proper decorum, and in accordance with a set of published rules as agreed upon.

It is in this way that institutions of the Office of the Governor and the Senate of the CNMI Legislature will restore credibility and respect for the process, as well as provide equal protection under the law, most especially for those who have been falsely accused of wrongdoing.

In short, the Senate proceedings will be able to deliver what the House JGO has failed to provide, what our Constitution and laws mandate, and what our community deserves: equal protection under the law and the truth.

**Should the Articles of Impeachment pass the House and advance to the Senate, I'll prove, again, that none of the false allegations brought against me are illegal or outside the scope of my authority as governor.**



**EDITORIAL POLICY**

Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

## How will future historians judge Jan. 6?

For a brief moment last January, in the immediate wake of the assault on the U.S. Capitol, it appeared that the final chapter of the Trump era was being written. After protesters had been cleared from the building, both branches of Congress affirmed, by large majorities, that Joe Biden had been elected president.

In addition, leading Republicans were harshly critical of the attack, putting distance between themselves and President Donald Trump.

"Count me out; enough is enough," lamented Sen. Lindsey Graham. Sen. Mitch McConnell concluded that "the mob" had been "fed lies" and was "provoked by the president and other powerful people." Even House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy declared that "the president bears responsibility for Wednesday's attack on Congress."

With Trump leaving office under a cloud and the protesters being rounded up by the police, the Jan. 6 attack seemed destined to be viewed in history as a dramatic anomaly, a vivid example of self-defeating overreach that revealed the dangers of Trumpism and the limits of tolerable political behavior.

But as we now know, the ship of Trump righted itself quickly. Over the next few months, Republican leaders—including Graham and McCarthy—traveled to Mar-a-Lago to pledge allegiance to Trump, embracing the falsehood that he had actually won the election or at least had good reason to suspect that wide-

spread fraud had occurred. They absolved him of responsibility for the violence and reassured their party's base that Trump's grievances were legitimate.

Those steps ushered in a wave of activity that continues to this day: efforts to "audit" the 2020 election returns, punish "disloyal" Republicans, harass and threaten local election officials, alter election laws to make it more difficult for many Americans to cast ballots and prevent nonpartisan bodies from adjudicating election disputes.

Given these developments, historians, writing a generation from now, will almost inescapably characterize what happened on Jan. 6 as a significant step in the weakening, even breakdown, of democratic norms and institutions in the United States.

The attack on the Capitol will be regarded as one prong of a multifaceted coup attempt, utilizing force in conjunction with phony legal claims (for example, that Vice President Mike Pence could simply reject electoral votes) to deliver the presidency to a man who had been defeated both in the electoral college and in the popular vote.

It will be remembered not as an anomaly but as a threatening precedent, especially if key sponsors connected to the White House are not charged with any crimes. The event will be seen to have emboldened, rather than chastened, many far-right supporters of Trump, sharpening partisan antagonisms and undermining respect for democratic processes.

By **ALEXANDER KEYSSAR**

Los Angeles Times

*Alexander Keyssar is a professor of history and social policy at Harvard and the author, most recently, of Why Do We Still Have the Electoral College?*



To be sure, there will be disagreements among historians; there always are. Some will see Jan. 6 largely as the product of Trump's particularly twisted psychology, his narcissistic inability to ever believe that he had been fairly defeated. Others will place more emphasis on broader forces that had been building for decades, including the deepening of economic inequalities and the growing racial and ethnic heterogeneity of the country. Historians will debate the roles played by racism, Christian nationalism, militant groups like the Proud Boys and the Democratic Party's disconnection from parts of the white working and middle classes.

Interpretations will also change, as we learn more and gain distance from the events. In recent months, documents released by the House select committee investigating the attack, as well as the dogged work of journalists, have already shifted the contours of the narrative, particularly regarding the participation of Republican leaders. That process will continue, filling in blank spots and altering the details of the story.

However much the details may shift, future historians will look to these events for what they revealed about the political culture of 2020 and what they fostered in American politics in the 2020s and 2030s.

That said, it is all but certain that a revisionist history will also appear, as is common with contentious events. Political movements like Trump's require historical myths that justify their existence and mobilize energy. The core of this counter-narrative will be that the election was indeed stolen, as is already believed by most Republicans. In the counter-narrative, the violence on Jan. 6 will be diluted and brushed off (one member of Congress has already characterized it as a "normal tourist visit"), and the insurrectionists will be characterized as patriotic defenders of the Constitution. Books and articles will be written fleshing out this perspective, and a sizable segment of Americans will believe it, just as more than 40% still believe the Civil War was not about slavery.

It seems likely, then, that a generation from now there will be a broad consensus among scholars on the causes and consequences of Jan. 6, but that consensus will not extend to the public at large. A more universally shared understanding might have been forged had an independent commission (like the 9/11 commission) been created, as was proposed last spring.

But Senate Republicans, intent on moving on from a crisis created by their party's leader, rejected that idea; by now, the moment has passed.

The nasty partisan divide that sunders our society and our politics will continue to color retrospective accounts of the drama we witnessed a year ago.

The great danger of this divergence is that it will shape the way we regard elections themselves and whether we trust their officially declared outcomes. Trust is a precious—and necessary—ingredient in a democracy, and thanks to the actions of Trump and his supporters over the past year, it is in short supply.



Supporters of President Donald Trump climb the west wall of the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021, in Washington.

AP

### TALK

From Page 8

When one side comes this close to abandoning the fundamental pillars upon which this nation is founded, the question becomes more than just theoretical: Can American democracy, or America itself, survive if this radical faction doesn't come to its senses?

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### LETTER TO THE EDITOR

## Annus horribilis

In my opinion, 2021 was a very 'Bad News Year' with COVID-19 accelerating instead of abating, the Trump orchestrated attack on our capitol and the Constitution plus the loss of so many celebrities from various cultures. The few good happenings include our sensible plan to defeat the current pandemic, trips into outer space and the amazing bronze statue of entertainer






Frank Sinatra unveiled in his hometown Hoboken, NJ celebrating his birthday on Dec. 12. Even more important is the fact people are getting vaccinated and then getting their booster shots, ignoring the GOP messengers of misinformation. Looking forward to a more peaceful 2022 and a return to our daily routines as we continue our unrelenting attack on this pandemic. Science will win!

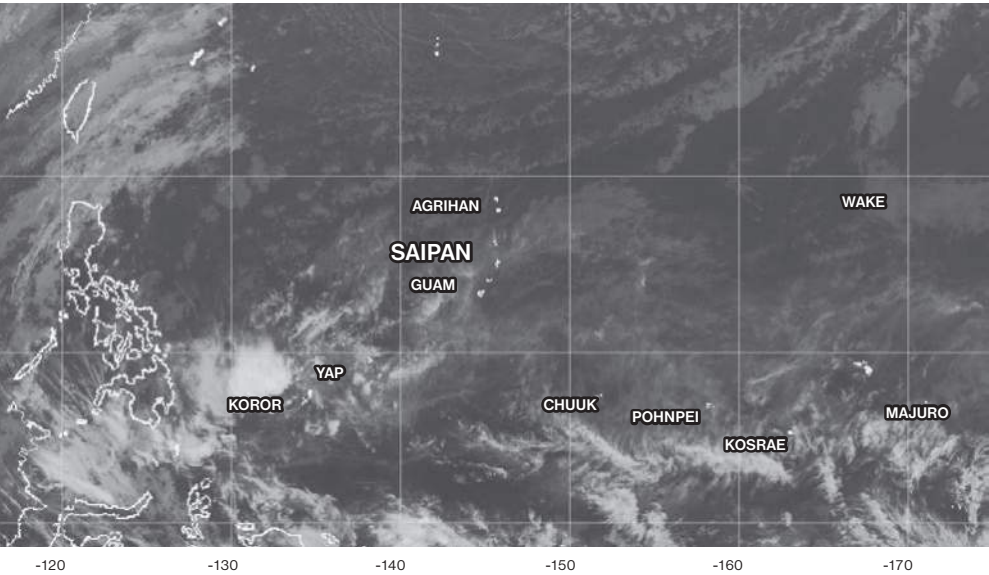
**Herb Stark**

Mooresville, NC



# The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN									
TODAY		FRIDAY		SATURDAY		SUNDAY		MONDAY	
									
Breezy. Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Northeast to east winds 15 to 25 mph		Partly cloudy with a 10 percent chance of showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph		Partly cloudy with isolated showers.		Partly cloudy with isolated showers.		Mostly cloudy. Isolated showers.	
86°	76°	86°	76°	86°	76°	86°	76°	86°	76°
YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE									



PICTURE TIME: 7:27 AM, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 5, 2022

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Satellite shows yesterday`s shearline well south of Guam with a shear line fragment near Saipan and slowly moving south. Winds continue to be fresh to strong across the water with gust of 25 mph being reported at Saipan. Ipan buoy is reporting seas around 6 to 7 feet and altimetry shows seas around 9 to 11 feet to the west and east of the Marianas.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: [www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/](http://www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/)

## STOP THE SPREAD

**T**he Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. continue to encourage residents within the Marianas to practice social distancing, which means avoiding close contact with people in order to avoid catching the virus yourself and to avoid passing it on to others.

- Stay home as much as possible. Avoid unnecessary travel or public places.
- Avoid social gatherings in groups of more than 10.
- Choose drive-thru, take-out, or delivery options, or outdoor seating, if available, when dining in.
- Send only one healthy adult from the household run necessary errands, such as getting groceries or picking up medications. Leave children, elderly, and other vulnerable people at home as much as possible. When returning home from an errand, wash your hands before doing anything else.
- Older adults and people with chronic medical conditions are at higher risk of getting very sick from this illness. People at high risk should stay at home as much as possible.
- Create a household plan of action, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/checklisthousehold-ready.html>
- Ensure a 30-day supply of all medicines.

**Continue good hand hygiene**

- Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, avoid touching your face, cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your sleeve.
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not readily available.


**Know the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and what to do if you become symptomatic**

- Stay home when you are sick and if you recently traveled to a place with COVID-19. Self-quarantine means:
  - Choosing a room in your house that can be used to separate sick household members from others.
  - Washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

**Rumor control**

During crises like this, oftentimes the spread of misinformation is just as dangerous as the virus itself. The CNMI is reminded to only share official and verified notices, press releases, and advisories from the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and CHCC.

*Source: Office of the Governor*



onds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

- Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Limiting visitors

CHCC appreciates the patience and understanding of the community at this time. To obtain general information about the CNMI COVID-19 response, contact the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force Hotline at 287-0046, 287-0489, 287-1089. These numbers are available Monday to Sunday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For medical information about COVID-19, reach out to the COVID-19 Infoline at the following numbers: 285-1672/1352. These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For mental health support and helpful tips during a crisis, call the Mental Health Support Line at 285-1856, 323-6560, 323-6561 These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30 pm. For the 24/7 Disaster Distress Helpline, call SAMSHA at 1-800-985-5990.

For more information about DIY face coverings, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html>

For more information about CHCC programs, follow CHCC on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter at @cnmichcc, check out our website at [www.chcc.gov.mp](http://www.chcc.gov.mp) or call us at (670) 234-8950.

For more information on the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force, visit [www.governor.gov.mp](http://www.governor.gov.mp) and, follow @GovernorCNMI on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

This health advisory may be found online at <http://www.chcc.gov.mp/pressrelease.html> and at [www.governor.gov.mp/covid-19](http://www.governor.gov.mp/covid-19).

**NEWS DESK** For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235.3740. E-mail: [editor@saipantribune.com](mailto:editor@saipantribune.com). Website:[www.saipantribune.com](http://www.saipantribune.com).

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MICRONESIA			▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Thunderstorms	84 / 76 °F	
Palau	Thunderstorms	84 / 77 °F	
Yap	Thunderstorms	83 / 78 °F	
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	85 / 80 °F	
Pohnpei	Partly Cloudy	86 / 78 °F	
Kosrae	Partly Cloudy	85 / 79 °F	
Majuro	Mostly Cloudy	85 / 80 °F	

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:44 AM	6:00 PM
Friday	6:44 AM	6:01 PM
Saturday	6:45 AM	6:01 PM
Sunday	6:45 AM	6:02 PM
Monday	6:45 AM	6:03 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	9:48 AM	9:38 PM	
Friday	10:32 AM	10:32 PM	-
Saturday	11:11 AM	11:24 PM	-
Sunday	11:48 AM	-	-
Monday	-	12:13 PM	-

AROUND THE GLOBE			▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	AM Clouds/PM Sun	77 / 65 °F	
Beijing	Sunny	42 / 19 °F	
Hong Kong	Mostly Sunny	71 / 61 °F	
Honolulu	Sunny	79 / 67 °F	
London	Light Rain	44 / 37 °F	
Los Angeles	Sunny	71 / 47 °F	
Manila	Partly Cloudy	86 / 73 °F	
Melbourne	Thunderstorms	80 / 69 °F	
Miami	Partly Cloudy	78 / 66 °F	
New York	Mostly Cloudy	39 / 30 °F	
Osaka	M Clouds/PM Sun	46 / 37 °F	
Paris	Partly Cloudy	44 / 37 °F	
Busan	Partly Cloudy	50 / 31 °F	
Rome	PM Light Rain	53 / 40 °F	
Salem	Showers	59 / 26 °F	
San Francisco	Cloudy	54 / 49 °F	
Seoul	Sunny	39 / 15 °F	
Tokyo	PM Rain/Snow Showers	39 / 31 °F	
Washington, DC	Cloudy	39 / 25 °F	

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY			FEET
04:15 AM	Low Tide	-0.69	
11:27 AM	High Tide	1.78	
5:04 PM	Low Tide	0.99	
9:37 PM	High Tide	1.64	

## FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF NOVEMBER 12, 2021

DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)				GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
UA117	7:20am	8:05am	2, 4, 6	UA116	5:30am	6:16am	2, 4, 6
UA117	9:50am	10:35am	1, 3, 5, 7	UA174	8:00am	8:46am	1, 3, 5, 7
GUAM-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-GUAM			
UA183	8:00pm	9:50pm	Daily	UA184	10:40pm	4:30am+1	2, 5
				UA184	10:55pm	4:45am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN			
UA117/183	7:20am	9:50pm	2, 4, 6 via Guam	UA184/174	10:40pm	6:16am+1	5 via Guam
UA117/183	9:50am	9:50pm	1, 3, 5, 7 via Guam	UA184/174	10:40pm	8:46am+1	2 via Guam
				UA184/174	10:55pm	6:16am+1	1, 3 via Guam
				UA184/174	10:55pm	8:46am+1	4, 6, 7 via Guam
SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)				INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN			
7C3406	3:10PM	6:55PM	6	7C3405	8:30AM	2:10PM	6
TW9308	3:20PM	8:00PM	4, 5	OZ6233	9:00AM	2:30PM	6
OZ6243	4:00PM	7:40PM	6	TW9307	10:00AM	2:20PM	4, 5

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

## STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

### FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF MAY 18, 2021

SAIPAN TO ROTA				ROTA TO SAIPAN			
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1301	8:30AM	9:00AM	Daily	3101	9:30AM	10:00AM	Daily
1302	11:00AM	11:30AM	Daily	3102	12:00AM	12:30AM	Daily
1303	1:30PM	2:00PM	Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri Daily	3103	1:30PM	3:00PM	Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri Daily
1304	3:30PM	4:00PM		3104	4:30PM	5:00PM	
ROTA TO GUAM				GUAM TO ROTA			
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3401	12:15	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable	4301	13:00	13:30	Temporarily Unavailable
SAIPAN TO TINIAN				TINIAN TO SAIPAN			
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1201	7:00	7:15	Temporarily Unavailable	2101	7:30	7:45	Temporarily Unavailable
1202	8:00	8:15	Daily	2102	8:30	8:45	Daily
1203	9:00	9:15	Daily	2103	9:30	9:45	Daily
				2104	10:30	10:45	Daily
				2105	11:30	11:45	Daily
				2106	12:30	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable
				2107	13:30	13:45	Temporarily Unavailable
				2108	14:30	14:45	Daily
				2109	15:30	15:45	Daily
				2110	16:30	16:45	Daily
				2111	17:30	17:45	Daily
				2112	18:30	18:45	Temporarily Unavailable



# Business

## New auto sales up in 2021, but long way before full recovery

**DETROIT (AP)**—U.S. new vehicle sales rebounded slightly last year from 2020's dismal numbers, but were still about 2 million below the years before the coronavirus pandemic.

The reason? Although there are plenty of customers who want to buy new vehicles at hefty prices, there still aren't enough computer chips for the industry to fully crank up its factories. So supplies are short, prices are high, and many customers can't get what they want.

Sales hit just over 15 million vehicles in 2021, up 3.4% from 2020, the year the pandemic took hold in the U.S.

"Demand is not off at all," said Michelle Krebs, executive analyst for Cox Automotive. "What is off is sales, because the inventory doesn't exist."

Cox expects 2021 sales to be 14.9 million vehicles, up 2.5% from 2020, the year the

pandemic hit the U.S. and forced the industry to shut down for eight weeks. But over the five years before the pandemic, sales averaged 17.3 million.

Among the hardest hit by the chip shortage was General Motors, which was unseated by Toyota last year as the nation's top-selling automaker for the first time.

GM on Tuesday reported that last year's U.S. sales fell 13% from 2020 levels to just over 2.2 million. Toyota, on the other hand, saw its sales rise 10.4% to just over 2.3 million.

Like other automakers, GM was forced to temporarily close factories during the year as it struggled to get semiconductors, especially early in the year. Krebs said she isn't sure if GM will be able to dislodge Toyota this year because Toyota has managed the chip shortage better and has a faster

distribution.

GM diverted limited chip supplies to higher-margin pickup trucks and full-size SUVs, boosting the company's bottom line, spokesman Jim Cain said. Early last year, GM forecast pretax earnings of \$10 billion to \$11 billion, but expects to finish the year around \$14 billion, he said.

The company, Cain said, expects the chip shortage to ease this year, with more available in the second half.

Among other automakers reporting full-year sales numbers were Ford with a 7% year-over-year decline, Stellantis with a 2.2% drop, and Subaru with sales falling 4.6% below 2020. Honda posted an 8.9% increase, while Hyundai saw a 23.3% jump. Nissan sales also rose, by 8.7%, while Volkswagen Group posted an 11.7% increase, according to Motor Intelligence.

Analysts and industry ex-

ecutives say although chip supplies are improving, its not certain when they'll get back to pre-pandemic levels. The average gas-powered vehicle has about 1,000 chips, and electric vehicles can have more than double that number.

IHS Markit analyst Phil Amsrud, who follows automotive chips, said supplies won't improve immediately.

"We're seeing 2022 as being an improvement over 2021, but it's not going to start January third or fourth," he said, adding that the second half should be better than the first.

There are signs that the number of vehicles on dealer lots is growing, though. It rose to more than 1 million last month for the first time since August, Krebs said. But that's still 1.5 million below 2020 and 2.5 million fewer than in 2019.

Cox is predicting that U.S.

new vehicle sales will increase by more than 1 million this year, to around 16 million.

Amsrud attributed the vehicle inventory growth more to automakers managing the chip shortage better, rather than any dramatic growth in chip supplies. Like GM, many have allocated chips to build more expensive models.

David Kelleher, owner of a Stellantis dealership in Glen Mills, Pennsylvania, near Philadelphia, said he doesn't see much change in auto sales and prices this year or next, but he's happy with that.

He's making record profits, selling just about every vehicle he gets at sticker price, while customers are happy to find vehicles. They're also getting high prices for trade-ins because used car prices have skyrocketed.

Owners have an average of \$10,199 worth of equity in their trades, 83% higher than a year ago, J.D. Power said.

"The customer right now just wants the (good) experience and the car," Kelleher said. "If you have the car and you get them the car, they're going to be happy with you."

## US flight cancellations ease a bit but still running high

Clearing weather over much of the eastern United States raised hopes that air-travel disruptions will ease after a dreadful start to the new year.

By early Tuesday evening on the East Coast, airlines had scrubbed about 1,500 flights for the day. That's a very high number but well below Monday's disruptions, which included more than 3,200 canceled flights.

Southwest Airlines canceled about 400 flights, or 12% of its schedule Tuesday.

Airlines had already canceled nearly 500 U.S. flights for Wednesday, according to FlightAware.

The number of canceled flights began rising Dec. 24, and several airlines blamed it on crew shortages due to the

spreading omicron variant of COVID-19. Over the weekend, the sickouts were compounded by winter storms that swept across the country.

About 2,700 U.S. flights were canceled on Saturday and a similar number were grounded Sunday. Thousands more were delayed. In all, about 20,000 U.S. flights have been canceled since Christmas Eve, according to FlightAware figures.

Airlines often canceled flights long before storms hit, based on weather forecasts. Airlines think that by operating a reduced schedule they will avoid having planes and crews trapped in the wrong cities, but it frustrates passengers whose flights get canceled while it's still sunny outside. (AP)

## START 2022 WITH GREAT DEAL

## Kensington offers New Year flash sale

Kensington Hotel Saipan wrapped up 2021 successfully with a fabulous countdown party, but the feast does not end there. Kensington is starting the new year with a Flash Sale from today to celebrate the New Year with great deal and better service.

From Jan. 6 and for the next two weeks, CNMI residents can enjoy up to \$60 discount when they make a reservation with Room & Breakfast combo for a stay anytime this January. The great sale covers all room types, from Royal Deluxe to the one and only Kensington Suites. Breakfast will be inclusive for four person each room, and it will be international style breakfast at the Loria.

What's more, Kensington's local loved Meisho Authentic Japanese Buffet is back starting this Saturday, along with the Irresistible Sunday Brunch. Don't miss out the




CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

From Jan. 6 and for the next two weeks, CNMI residents can enjoy up to \$60 discount when they make a reservation with Room & Breakfast combo for a stay anytime this January.


finest dining experience you can enjoy on the island.

Start 2022 with a fine treat to you and your family! Reservation and inquiry at 322-3311. (PR)





**PROCUREMENT SERVICES  
CNMI GOVERNMENT**



**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL**  
**RFP NO.: DOF/OIT-RFP-42200032**

**SUBMISSION DATE: JANUARY 12, 2022**  
**TIME: 09:00 A.M.**

**"BORDER PROTECTION PLATFORM (HEALTHY  
VACCINE PASSPORT, CUSTOMS AND MVA EDF)  
FOR THE OFFICE OF SECRETARY OF FINANCE"**

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT SERVICES, LOCATED AT THE HORIGUCHI BLDG., GROUND FLOOR, 123 KOPPA DI ORU & BEACH ROAD, GARAPAN, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

**"FOR YOUR SAFETY & OURS: ALL INTERESTED INDIVIDUALS ARE REQUIRED TO USE A FACE MASK & ARE REQUIRED TO REGISTER UPON ENTRY"**

QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS RFP MUST BE SUBMITTED IN WRITING TO MR. DAVID DLG. ATALIG, SECRETARY OF FINANCE, VIA E-MAIL TO [david.atalig@dof.gov.mp](mailto:david.atalig@dof.gov.mp) **NO LATER THAN THE CLOSE OF BUSINESS 04:30 P.M., JANUARY 10, 2022.**

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ **DAVID DLG. ATALIG**  
SECRETARY OF FINANCE

/S/ **FRANCISCO C. AGUON**  
ACTING DIRECTOR, P&S



# Business

## Drivers fret about food and fuel while stranded on highway

**RICHMOND, Va. (AP)**—There was no food, water or sleep for Susan Phalen as she spent a frigid night inside her car stopped on Interstate 95 in Virginia. Meera Rao and her husband were only 100 feet past an exit but were unable to move for 16 hours.

Sen. Tim Kaine was on his way to Washington when a seemingly simple commute stretched into a 21-hour ordeal that became “a kind of survival project.”

They were among hundreds of people who got stranded on the East Coast’s main north-south highway in freezing temperatures after a winter storm snarled traffic and left some drivers stuck in place for as much as a full day.

The problems began Monday morning when a truck jackknifed on I-95, triggering a chain reaction as other vehicles lost control, state police said. Eventually lanes in both directions became blocked across a 40-mile stretch of the highway between Richmond and the nation’s capital at a time when snow was falling around 2 inches an hour.



Drivers wait for the traffic to be cleared as cars and trucks are stranded on sections of Interstate 95 Tuesday Jan. 4, 2022, in Carmel Church, Va. Close to 48 miles of the Interstate was closed due to ice and snow.

Hundreds of motorists spent the night in their vehicles, worrying about a lack of food, fuel and water as temperatures fell into the teens. One family reported that they went more than 18 hours without eating.

There were no reports of serious injuries or deaths, but there was plenty of anger among drivers.

“No one came. It was just shocking,” said Rao, who was traveling home to Burtonsville, Maryland, after visiting her daughter in North Carolina when she got stuck Monday evening. “Being in the most advanced country in the world, no one knew how to even clear one

lane for all of us to get out of that mess?”

It took until Tuesday evening around 8:30 p.m. for the Virginia Department of Transportation to reopen the interstate. Authorities had announced earlier in the evening that all stranded motorists had made it off the highway. Transportation officials then oversaw the removal of remaining abandoned vehicles and making sure the entire

stretch was plowed.

As stranded motorists waited in their cars, many posted desperate messages on social media. Between midnight and 3 a.m. Tuesday, traffic came to a complete standstill, state officials said.

Gov. Ralph Northam said his team responded through the night by sending emergency messages to connect drivers with help and working with local officials to set up

warming shelters as needed. Officials told reporters crews were helping distribute food, water and fuel.

Rao said they stopped their car engine at least 30 times to conserve gas and ran the heat just enough to get warm. They had some potato chips, nuts and apples to eat, but Rao did not want to drink any bottled water because she had a sprained ankle and did not think she could reach a make-shift restroom.

Finally, around midmorning Tuesday, a tow truck driver appeared and cleared away snow, allowing the Raos and other cars back up and take the exit.

“He was a messenger from God,” Rao said. “I literally was in tears.”

People who were stranded and their families lashed out at Northam on Twitter, asking why the Virginia National Guard was not deployed.

Northam said in an interview that he opted not to request National Guard help because the issue facing state crews was not a lack of manpower but the difficulty of getting workers and equipment through the snow and ice to where they needed to be. He said that effort was complicated by the disabled vehicles, freezing temperatures and ice.

## Biden urges concern but not alarm in US as omicron rises

**WASHINGTON (AP)**—President Joe Biden urged concern but not alarm Tuesday as the United States set records for daily reported COVID-19 cases and his administration



Biden

struggled to ease concerns about testing shortages, school closures and other disruptions caused by the omicron variant.

In remarks before a meeting with his COVID-19 response team at the White House, Biden aimed to convey his administration’s urgency in addressing omicron and convince wary Americans that the current situation bears little resemblance to the onset of the pandemic or last year’s deadly winter. The president emphasized that vaccines, booster shots and therapeutic drugs have lessened the danger for the overwhelming majority of Americans who are fully vaccinated.

“You can still get COVID, but it’s highly unlikely, very unlikely, that you’ll become seriously ill,” Biden said of vaccinated people.

“There’s no excuse, there’s no excuse for anyone being unvaccinated,” he added. “This continues to be a pandemic of the unvaccinated.” He also encouraged Americans, including newly eligible teenagers 12 to 15, to get a booster dose of the vaccines for maximum protection.

Compared with last year, more Americans are employed, most kids are in classrooms, and instances of death and serious illness are down—precipitously so among the vaccinated.

“We’re in a very different place than we were a year ago,” said White House press secretary Jen Psaki when asked if the country had lost control of the virus.

Still, over the past several weeks Americans have seen dire warnings about hospitals reaching capacity amid staffing shortages, thousands of holiday flight cancellations in part because crews were ill or in quarantine, and intermittent reports of school closures because of the more-transmissible variant.

## CDC posts rationale for shorter isolation, quarantine

**NEW YORK (AP)**—The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on Tuesday explained the scientific rationale for shortening its COVID-19 isolation and quarantine recommendations, and clarified that the guidance applies to kids as well as adults.

The CDC also maintained that, for people who catch COVID-19, testing is not required to emerge from five days of isolation—despite hints from other federal officials that the

agency was reconsidering that.

The agency announced the changes last week, halving the isolation time for Americans who catch the coronavirus and have no symptoms or only brief illnesses. Isolation should only end if a person has been fever-free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications and if other symptoms are resolving, the CDC added.

It similarly shortened the time that close contacts need to

quarantine, from 10 days to five.

CDC officials previously said the changes were in keeping with evidence that people with the coronavirus are most infectious in the two days before and three days after symptoms develop.

Some experts have questioned how the new recommendations were crafted and why they were changed amid a spike in cases driven largely by the highly contagious omicron variant. Some

also expressed dismay that the guidelines allowed people to leave isolation without getting tested to see if they were still infectious.

On Tuesday, the CDC posted documents designed to address those—and other—questions about the latest recommendations. The new guidance applies to school children as well as adults, the CDC said, responding to questions raised by school leaders around the country.

## A record 4.5 million Americans quit their jobs in November

**WASHINGTON (AP)**—A record 4.5 million American workers quit their jobs in November, a sign of confidence and more evidence that the U.S. job market is bouncing back strongly from last year’s coronavirus recession.

The Labor Department also reported Tuesday that employers posted 10.6 million job openings in November, down from 11.1 million in October but still high by historical standards.

Employers hired 6.7 million people in November, up from 6.5 million in October, the Labor Department reported

Tuesday in its monthly Jobs Openings and Labor Turnover Survey.

Nick Bunker, research director at the Indeed Hiring Lab, noted that quits were high in the low-wage hotel and restaurant industries. “Lots of quits means stronger worker bargaining power which will likely feed into strong wage gains,” he said. “Wage growth was very strong in 2021, and ... we might see more of the same in 2022.”

Still, the Labor Department collected the numbers before COVID-19’s omicron variant

had spread widely in the United States. “While each successive wave of the pandemic caused less economic damage, there is still a risk to the labor market from the current surge of cases,” Bunker said.

The job market is rebounding from last year’s brief but intense coronavirus recession. When COVID hit, governments ordered lockdowns, consumers stayed home and many businesses closed or cut hours. Employers slashed more than 22 million jobs in March and April 2020, and the unemployment rate rocketed to 14.8%.

But massive government spending—and eventually the rollout of vaccines—brought the economy back. Employers have added 18.5 million jobs since April 2020, still leaving the U.S. still 3.9 million jobs short of what it had before the pandemic. The December jobs report, out Friday, is expected to show that the economy generated almost 393,000 more jobs this month, according to a survey by the data firm FactSet.

The unemployment rate has fallen to 4.2%, close to what economists consider full employment.



# Asia

## N.Korea fires suspected ballistic missile into sea

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—North Korea fired a suspected ballistic missile into the sea on Wednesday, the South Korean and Japanese militaries said, its first public weapons launch in about two months and a signal that Pyongyang isn't interested in rejoining denuclearization talks anytime soon and would rather focus on boosting its weapons arsenal.

The latest launch came after North Korean leader Kim Jong Un vowed to further boost his military capability—without disclosing any new policies toward the United States or South Korea—at a high-profile ruling party conference last week.

South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said in a statement that North Korea fired a suspected ballistic missile toward its eastern waters on Wednesday morning. It said South Korean and U.S. intelligence authorities were trying to analyze more information about the launch.

The Japanese Defense Ministry also detected the North Korean launch, saying the country likely fired a missile.

"We find it truly regrettable that North Korea has continued to fire missiles from last year," Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida told reporters.

Kishida said other details about the North Korean

launch weren't immediately available, including where the suspected missile landed and whether there had been any damage. He said he ordered officials to confirm the safety of ships and planes in the area where the suspected missile likely flew and fell.

Wednesday's launch was the first such firing since North Korea tested a series of newly developed weapons between September and November including nuclear-capable missiles that place South Korea and Japan, both key U.S. allies in the region, within striking distance. Some experts said North Korea was applying more pressure on its rivals to accept it as a nuclear power state in the hopes of winning relief from economic sanctions on the country.

The Biden administration has repeatedly said it is open to resuming nuclear diplomacy with North Korea "anywhere and at any time" without preconditions. The North has so far rebuffed such overtures, saying U.S. hostility remains unchanged.

Outgoing South Korean President Moon Jae-in said in his New Year's address Tuesday that he would continue to seek ways to restore ties with North Korea and promote peace on the Korean Peninsula until his single five-year term ends in May. He has recently

pushed for a political, symbolic declaration to end the 1950-53 Korean War as a way to reduce animosities.

U.S.-led diplomacy aimed at convincing North Korea to abandon its nuclear program collapsed in 2019 due to wrangling over how much sanctions relief should be given to the North in return for dismantling its main nuclear complex, a limited denuclearization step. Kim has since threatened to enlarge his nuclear arsenal, though his country's economy has suffered major setbacks due to the COVID-19 pandemic, persistent U.S.-led sanctions and his own mismanagement.

"Rather than expressing willingness for denuclearization talks or interest in an end-of-war declaration, North Korea is signaling that neither the omicron variant nor domestic food shortages will stop its aggressive missile development," said Leif-Eric Easley, a professor at Ewha University in Seoul.

Kim Dong-yub, a professor at the University of North Korean Studies in Seoul, said that North Korea might have tested a developmental hypersonic missile or a nuclear-capable KN-23 missile with a highly maneuverable and lower-trajectory flight. He said North Korea would likely move forward with its military build-up plans.

complex practical engagement between the Australian Defense Force and the Japanese Self-Defense Forces." "Australia and Japan are the closest of friends," Morrison added. "Our special strategic partnership is stronger than it has ever been, reflecting our shared values, our commitment to democracy and human rights and our common interests in a free, open and resilient Indo-Pacific region."

### China reports fall in virus cases in Xi'an

BEIJING (AP)—China on Wednesday reported a major drop in local COVID-19 infections in the northern city of Xi'an, which has been under a tight lockdown for the past two weeks. With the Beijing Olympics beginning Feb. 4, China is doubling down on measures to prevent any new outbreak that could affect proceedings. People are being told to travel in and out of Beijing only if they absolutely need to and hotels have largely stopped taking new reservations. Athletes, officials and journalists are entering an "anti-pandemic" bubble as soon as they arrive and will remain within it until the Feb. 4-20 Winter Games are over. No fans from outside China are permitted and most of the spectators are expected to be drawn from schools, government offices and the military rather than the general public.

# World

## Mexico's COVID-19 infections up, notably in tourism centers

LA PAZ, Mexico (AP)—COVID-19 infections are rising across Mexico, especially in two states home to major tourism destinations on the Caribbean Sea and Pacific Ocean that were busy during the holiday season.

According to data from the federal government, Quintana Roo, where tourists flock to Cancun, Tulum and other spots along the Mayan Riviera, and Baja California Sur, which draws beachgoers to the twin Pacific resorts that make up Los Cabos, are both experiencing some of their highest infection totals since the start of the pandemic.

During the holidays, the waterfront and beaches in La Paz, the capital of Baja California Sur perched on the Sea of Cortez, were packed with tourists. Early in the pandemic they had been closed.

Farther south in Los Ca-



A woman receives a booster against COVID-19 during a vaccination campaign for people 60 and over, in Mexico City, Tuesday, Jan. 4, 2022.

bos, hotels were at 75% of their capacity during the week of Christmas, according to the federal Tourism ministry.

"In December, January, tourism took off," said Israel Coto, manager of a hotel-restaurant in La Ventana, about 20 miles south of La Paz. "People are tired of the confinement."

Infections shot up too. Baja California Sur saw 700 new infections Dec. 29, compared to a previous high in July of fewer than 600.

On the opposite coast, Quintana Roo, went from 27 cases Dec. 20 to 484 eight days later, though that remained below its single-day high of 574 in August.

## France sees 271K COVID cases in a day

PARIS (AP)—France reported a record-smashing 271,686 daily virus cases on Tuesday as omicron infections race across the country, burdening hospital staff and threatening to disrupt transport, schools and other services.

The French government is straining to avoid a new economically damaging lockdown, and is instead trying to rush a vaccine pass bill through parliament in hopes that it is enough to protect hospitals.

But with Europe's highest number of confirmed daily virus cases, after weeks of re-

cord-breaking figures, France is in an increasingly challenging position. France's average daily case load has more than doubled in a week, with an overall current infection rate of more than 1,671 people out of 100,000 over the past week.

Britain, which is also seeing a big surge, reported a record 218,274 daily cases Tuesday. Germany reported 30,561 cases Tuesday.

More than 20,000 people are hospitalized with the virus in France, a number that has been rising steadily for weeks but not as sharply as the infection rates.

COVID-19 patients fill more than 72% of France's ICU beds, and a once-renowned health care system is again showing signs of strain. Most virus patients in ICUs are not vaccinated, though 77% of the population has had at least two doses.

More than 123,000 people with the virus have died in France, among the world's higher death tolls.

A growing number of people in France can't work because they are sick or are close contact cases, which is disrupting some hospitals and forced some regional train cancellations, among other services.

## Babies among nearly 100 hostages freed in northern Nigeria

ABUJA, Nigeria (AP)—Nearly 100 hostages, m women and children, have been rescued more than two months after they were abducted by armed groups in northwest Nigeria, police said Tuesday.

Among the 97 freed hostages are 19 babies and more than a dozen children, according to Ayuba Elkana, police chief in Zamfara state.

Mostly barefooted, weary and in worn-out clothes, the ex-captives trickled out of the buses that took them to Gusau, capital of Zamfara state. Women with malnourished-looking babies strapped to their backs trailed behind.

Coming a few days after 21 schoolchildren were freed by security forces, the rescue brought a sigh of relief in Nigeria where armed groups have killed thousands and kidnapped many residents and travelers in exchange for ransoms.

Police said the hostages were "rescued unconditionally" Monday in joint security operations targeting the camps of armed groups that have been terrorizing remote communities across the northwest and center of Africa's most populous country.

They had been abducted from their homes and along

highways in remote communities in Zamfara and neighboring Sokoto state.

The hostages had slept on the ground in abandoned forest reserves that serve as hideouts for the gunmen. The first batch of 68 "were in captivity for over three months and they include 33 male adults, seven male children, three female children and 25 women including pregnant/nursing mothers respectively," police chief Elkana said.

Another set of 29 victims were also rescued "unconditionally" in Kunchin Kalgo forest in the Tsafe local government area of Zamfara, police said.

### ASIAN BRIEFS

#### Thousands held on HK cruise ship for COVID testing

HONG KONG (AP)—Thousands of passengers were being held Wednesday on a cruise ship in Hong Kong for coronavirus testing after health authorities said nine passengers were linked to a recent omicron cluster and ordered the ship to turn back. Authorities forced the Royal Caribbean's Spectrum of the Seas ship, which began sailing on Sunday on a "cruise to nowhere," to return a day early on Wednesday, according to a government statement. The ship was ordered to return after nine passengers were identified as close contacts of an infected patient who was linked to a new omicron cluster. The ship returned to Hong Kong on Wednesday morning and passengers were being held onboard while they awaited testing.

#### Australia, Japan to sign 'historic' defense, security pact

SYDNEY (AP)—Australia and Japan will sign a treaty on Thursday to increase defense and security cooperation in a move that has been hailed as "historic" but which might anger China. Prime ministers Scott Morrison of Australia and Fumio Kishida of Japan will meet in a virtual summit to sign the agreement, which Morrison said "will underpin greater and more



# Environment

## 4 New Year's resolutions for a healthier environment in 2022

By VINIECE JENNINGS  
AGNES SCOTT COLLEGE

When many people think of New Year's resolutions, they brainstorm ways to improve themselves for the year ahead. What if we expanded those aspirations to include resolutions that benefit our communities, society and the planet, too?

It might not be a typical approach, but it can broaden your horizons to show ways you can also be of service to others.

Here are four popular New Year's resolutions with a twist for improving your relationship with nature in 2022 and beyond.

### Exercise more consideration for how your actions impact the environment

We each have an environmental ethic reflecting how we value, manage and ultimately relate to nature. Balancing the scales of reciprocity between us and nature—how much we give and take—can improve this relationship in many ways. Whether it's our addiction to one-use plastics that pile up in landfills or fossil fuels that warm the planet, a mishandled relationship with nature is not doing us or the Earth any favors.

In 2022, we can all take more responsibility for how our actions exacerbate environ-



mental problems. We can also encourage governments and businesses to make it easier for people from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds to protect the environment. This includes making recycled goods affordable and reliable public transportation widely accessible.

Check out the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's resources describing some very simple ways to reduce waste at home, work, in our communities and during the holidays. Tips from the website include turning off or unplugging lights during the day, reusing packaging materials and using online billing ser-

vices instead of paper mail.

### Lose the weight of social injustice—it harms nature, too

The perils of social injustice stress multiple aspects of society. Racism and inequality can lead to health disparities, and they also have consequences for the natural environment.

A recent study described how practices such as redlining and residential segregation led to unequal access to nature, excess pollution and biodiversity loss. These practices brought in highways and industries that harm environmental quality in marginalized communities. They also left neighborhoods with fewer parks and trees that provide cooling in summer and benefit the planet.

Perpetuating social ills like systemic racism and inequita-

ble resource allocation is detrimental to the environment, marginalized people and society as a whole.

To help turn this around, you can speak out in your community. Join groups that are trying to promote environmental protection and social justice and are bringing nature back to communities. Call your city, state and Congressional leaders to urge them to take action. Also, refer to the Green 2.0 report's section on making diversity initiatives successful for concrete ways that you can actualize this in your place of work.

### Learn something new about nature and how to reduce harm to the environment and yourself

Clean air, water and soil are

fundamental for our survival, but research shows many people lack basic environmental and health literacy to know how to protect themselves.

In 2022, get to know your own impact on the environment. Read more and start exploring ways to preserve the integrity of your area's natural resources. For example, find out where you can stay abreast of local land-use decisions that impact the environment and your overall community.

You can also support local educators and encourage them to bring the environment into lessons. Environmental issues overlap many other subjects, from history to health. This website includes a framework and materials for educators to help students expand their envi-

ronmental literacy.

Staying plugged in with media that discuss the latest research can enhance awareness. You can also try tying environmental facts and knowledge into your game night and team-building activities.

### Spend more time with family and friends in nature

Studies show that spending time in nature, including urban green spaces, can improve your relationship with nature and with others.

Time in nature can increase social cohesion. Throughout the pandemic, many people discovered the outdoors as a place to decompress and reduce stress. Spending more time outdoors can encourage social interactions that benefit health, buffer emotional distress and encourage use of these spaces, which can help protect them for the future.

Here are some tools that outline best practices to enhance parks and recreation near you. Also, here are ways to make outdoor environments more inclusive for families in diverse communities.

Collectively, thinking about our relationship with nature and finding ways to protect the environment can help us be better stewards of the planet.

*This article is republished from The Conversation under a Creative Commons license. Read the original article here: <https://theconversation.com/4-new-years-resolutions-for-a-healthier-environment-in-2022-172277>.*

## Global warming melting Himalayan glaciers at an 'exceptional' rate, study says

By DAVID MATTHEWS  
NEW YORK DAILY NEWS

The world has presented scientists with a new flashing warning sign.

According to a new study, global warming is causing glaciers in the Himalayas to melt at an "exceptional rate." The research was published in the journal Scientific Reports.

The glaciers are also melting there faster than any other region of the world, threatening the water supply of close to 2 billion people. Only Antarctica and the Arctic have more ice than the Himalayas.

"Our findings clearly show that ice is now being lost from Himalayan glaciers at a rate that is at least 10 times higher than the average rate over past centuries," University of Leeds professor and researcher Jonathan Carrivick, the study's lead author,

said in a statement. "This acceleration in the rate of loss has only emerged within the last few decades and coincides with human-induced climate change."

The study found that the glaciers in the Himalayas had lost as much as 40% of their area, much of it since the 1970s.

The glaciers supply water to people who live in the mountains and in the valleys near rivers like the the Ganges, Indus and Brahmaputra, and many others.

A colleague of Carrivick said time is running out to prevent further disaster.

"This research is just the latest confirmation that those changes are accelerating and that they will have a significant impact on entire nations and regions," University of Dundee researcher Simon Cook, one of the study's co-authors, said.

## US close to ending buried nuke waste cleanup at Idaho site

**BOISE, Idaho** (AP)—A lengthy project to dig up and remove radioactive and hazardous waste buried for decades in unlined pits at a nuclear facility that sits atop a giant aquifer in eastern Idaho is nearly finished, U.S. officials said.

The U.S. Department of Energy said last week that it removed the final amount of specifically-targeted buried waste from a 97-acre (39-hectare) landfill at its 890-square-mile (2,300-square-kilometer) site that includes the Idaho National Laboratory.

The targeted radioactive waste included plutonium-contaminated filters, graphite molds, sludges containing solvents and oxidized uranium generated during nuclear weapons production work

at the Rocky Flats Plant in Colorado. Some radioactive and hazardous remains in the Idaho landfill that will receive an earthen cover.

The waste from Rocky Flats was packaged in storage drums and boxes before being sent from 1954 to 1970 to the high-desert, sagebrush steppe of eastern Idaho where it was buried in unlined pits and trenches. The area lies about 50 miles (80 kilometers) west of the city of Idaho Falls.

The cleanup project, started in 2005, is named the Accelerated Retrieval Project and is one of about a dozen cleanup efforts of nuclear waste finished or ongoing at the Energy Department site.

The project involving the landfill is part of a 2008 agreement between the Energy Department and state offi-

cials that required the department to dig up and remove specific types and amounts of radioactive and hazardous material.

The agency said it removed about 13,500 cubic yards (10,300 cubic meters) of material—which is the equivalent of nearly 50,000 storage drums each containing 55 gallons (208 liters).

Most of the waste is being sent to the U.S. government's Waste Isolation Pilot Plant in New Mexico for permanent disposal. Some waste will be sent to other off-site repositories that could be commercial or Energy Department sites.

The Energy Department said it is 18 months ahead of schedule in its cleanup of the landfill.

"The buried waste was the primary concern of our stake-

holders since the beginning of the cleanup program," Connie Flohr, manager of the Idaho Cleanup Project for the Energy Department's Office of Environmental Management, said in a statement. "Completing exhumation early will allow us to get an earlier start on construction of the final cover."

Republican U.S. Rep. Mike Simpson represents the area that benefits from millions of federal dollars brought into the state by research work done at the Idaho National Laboratory.

"What exciting news for DOE and the Idaho Cleanup project," he said on Twitter about the landfill work. "A successful clean-up means protection for the region and the Snake River Plain Aquifer."



# Life & Style

## Police: R&B singer Derulo involved in Vegas resort scuffle

### David Bowie's extensive music catalog is sold to Warner

**NEW YORK (AP)**—The extensive music catalog of David Bowie, stretching from the late 1960s to just before his death in 2016, has been sold to Warner Chapell Music.

More than 400 songs, among them "Space Oddity," "Ziggy Stardust," "Fame," "Rebel Rebel" and "Let's Dance" on 26 Bowie studio albums released during his lifetime, a posthumous studio album release, *Toy*, two studio albums from Tin Machine, as well as tracks released as singles from soundtracks and other projects, are included.

Financial details of the sale were not released. Warner Chapell is the music publishing wing of Warner Music Group Corp. Bruce Springsteen sold his

catalog to Sony Music last month for a reported \$500 million. Among others that have sold their catalogs in recent years, either in part or in their entirety, are Bob Dylan, Neil Young and Stevie Nicks.

David Bowie, born David Jones in London in 1947, died in January 2016 after battling cancer for 18 months. As a performer, Bowie had unpredictable range of styles, melding European jadedness with American rhythms and his ever-changing personas and wardrobes. The gaunt and erudite Bowie brought an open theatricality and androgyny to popular music that changed the very meaning of being a rock star. He was inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame in 1996.



AP PHOTO/STEPHEN CHERNIN, FILE  
David Bowie accepts the lifetime achievement award at the 11th Annual Webby Awards in New York on June 5, 2007.

**LAS VEGAS (AP)**—Pop and R&B entertainer Jason Derulo was involved in a scuffle with two people early Tuesday at a Las Vegas Strip resort, but the singer, dancer and TikTok star was not arrested or given a summons, police said.

Las Vegas police said in a statement that an altercation was reported after 2 a.m. at a night club at the Aria resort and that Derulo "committed a battery against two individuals." No injuries were reported by police.

Emails to Derulo's agent and manager seeking comment were not immediately returned Tuesday.

Media reports including



AXEL SCHMIDT/POOL PHOTO VIA AP  
Singer Jason Derulo poses during a photocall upon arrival for the 2018 Echo Music Awards in Berlin on April 12, 2018.

video posted on celebrity website TMZ said Derulo, 32, struck at least one person near an escalator after someone

cursed him and called him by the name of another musician, Usher.

"The victims did not want

to press charges against Derulo," police said, and Derulo was told by hotel security to leave the property under a trespass order.

Police said no police report was taken because the people involved did not want to prosecute.

Derulo has sold millions of songs since 2009 and has 11 Platinum singles including "Wiggle," "Talk Dirty," "Want to Want Me," and "Whatcha Say."

## TV host Seth Meyers contracts COVID-19, show dark this week

**NEW YORK (AP)**—This week's remaining episodes of "Late Night with Seth Meyers" have been scrapped after the host tested positive for COVID-19.

Meyers tweeted Tuesday about his positive result but said he felt fine, thanking the vaccine and a booster shot. He

hosted an original broadcast on Monday.

NBC has canceled the four shows scheduled from Tuesday to Friday. "Tune in next Monday to see what cool location we will try and pass off as a studio!" Meyers tweeted.

"Late Night with Seth Meyers" is just the latest TV show

to grapple with the new surge in the pandemic. "Saturday Night Live" had to scramble to broadcast a new show last month without a live audience and with taped sketches. Fellow TV host Jimmy Fallon also revealed a positive COVID-19 result right before Christmas, despite being fully

vaccinated.

Other stars who've recently tested positive include Hugh Jackman, Whoopi Goldberg, Debra Messing and LL Cool J. On Tuesday, a COVID-19 diagnosis forced Lupita Nyong'o to cancel virtual interviews for her new movie "The 355."

## 'Mudi'? Try a toy: American Kennel Club adds 2 dog breeds

**NEW YORK (AP)**—An athletic Hungarian farm dog and a tiny pet of bygone Russian aristocrats are the latest breeds in the American Kennel Club's purebred lineup.

The club announced Tuesday that it's recognizing the Russian toy and the mudi. That means they're eligible to compete for best in show at many U.S. dog shows, including the AKC's big annual championship and

the prestigious Westminster Kennel Club show.

The mudi (whose American fans pronounce its name like "moody," although the vowel sound in Hungarian is closer to the "u" in "pudding") descended from long lines of Hungarian sheepdogs before a museum director took an interest in the breed and gave it a name around 1930. Fans say the medium-size, shaggy dogs are vigorous, versatile and

hardworking, able to herd sheep, hunt boars, snag rats and compete in canine sports such as agility and dock diving.

"They're very perceptive, and they have a subtle quality" and are very trainable, but they need things to do, said Kim Seiter, an Oak Ridge, New Jersey, dog agility trainer who has four of them. "They're not for the inactive person."

The dogs—the proper plu-

ral is "mudik"—were featured on postage stamps in their homeland in 2004, as were some other Hungarian breeds.

The Russian toy developed from small English terriers that gained the fancy of Russian elites by the early 1700s. The diminutive dogs—supposed to weigh no more than 6.5 pounds (2.7 kg)—have a leggy silhouette, perky expression and lively demeanor, breeders say.

## Politics strain friendship that's lasted for decades

**DEAR ABBY:** A friend of 40 years got mad at me after the last presidential election. I told her I didn't want to talk politics, since we voted for different candidates. She then emailed me saying she thought we should take a break from our long-distance phone calls. We had been calling each other every two weeks to catch up.

Because it has now been more than a year, I emailed her, texted her and finally left a message on her answering machine asking if she was still mad. (I did this over a period of a week.) Then I got worried, since she's in her 80s. I finally called her daughter and was told she was in the hospital recovering from heart surgery. When her daughter told her I was trying to get in touch, I received a text that read, "Not mad. Just don't want to talk."

I hate to give up on a long friendship. Her birthday is coming up. Should I send her a birthday card, or respect her wishes and give up?

OLD FRIEND IN FLORIDA

**DEAR OLD FRIEND:** Please don't jump to conclusions. People in the early stages of recovery from major surgery may not feel up to long discussions until they are stronger. By all means, send your friend a birthday card and include in it that you treasure your friendship and wish her a speedy and complication-free recovery. After THAT, the ball is in her court.

**DEAR ABBY:** I have been married to a lovely woman for 40 years. I recently found out that five years into our marriage she had an affair with a friend of ours. It lasted several weeks, during which they would meet at our house over the lunch hour.

My wife does not know this friend, having recently found religion, has confessed to me. I had suspected it for a few years. Should I tell her I know or just go on as though nothing happened?

IN THE KNOW IN ILLINOIS

**DEAR IN THE KNOW:** I cannot guess what justification this "friend" has given for trying to clear his conscience by telling you something that could destroy your marriage. The punishment for his guilt should have been the burden of carrying it to his grave without sharing it with you. If his confession will erode your relationship with your wife, tell her what you were told so you can talk it through.

**DEAR ABBY:** My neighbor's husband died of COVID-related problems. I was never officially informed. About a week later, his clothing, favorite chair and other items were put on the curb in a free pile. While the pile is now gone, my concern is for the people who took the items. I will let you inform the world what might be the better solution.

PANICKED IN OREGON

## DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN  
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

*Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at [www.DearAbby.com](http://www.DearAbby.com) or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.*



**DEAR PANICKED:** I am glad to do that. The information is available to anyone who is interested. Folks, it's as near as your computer. Fire it up and go to [cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html](http://cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html), where you will find a "Frequently Asked Questions" section with information about how the virus is spread and how to avoid contracting it. From what I have read, germs on surfaces are less likely to spread the virus than person-to-person contact.

*To receive a collection of Abby's most memorable – and most frequently requested – poems and essays, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby – Keepers Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)*



Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

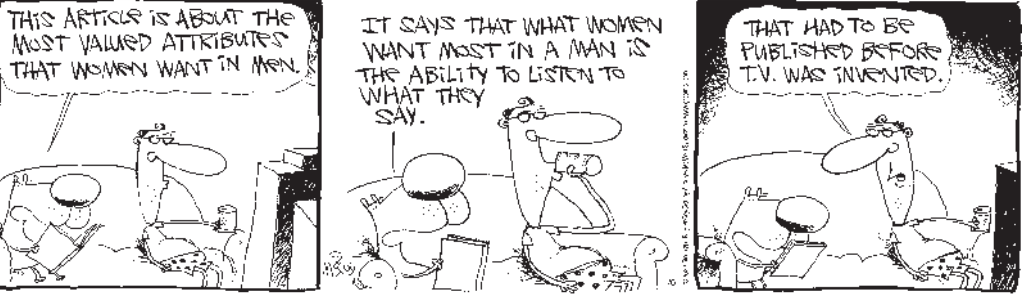
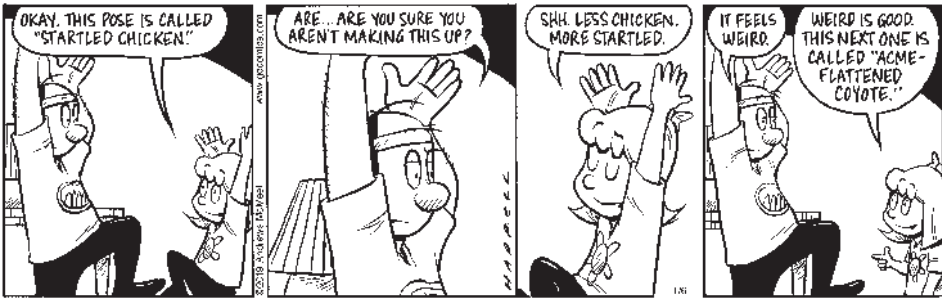


Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 TV schedule abbr.

4 Rotate

8 Exerciser's target

12 Slithery fish

13 Layered cookie

14 Greek vowel

15 Selfless-ness

17 Seize

18 Chapeau

19 Slogan

21 Garden figurines

24 Use henna

25 Post-op area

26 Apply cream

28 College study

32 Close by

34 "Gee, ya think?"

36 Golfer's cry

37 Campfire leftovers

39 Clothing protector

41 Sandwich meat

42 "— been real"

44 By and large

46 Opposite of

50 Egggy quaff

51 Bern's river

52 Halite

56 Egyptian deity

57 Shrek, for one

58 Half of CIV

59 Society newbies

60 French perfume brand

61 Prom rental

2 Ann Patchett's "— Canto"

3 However

4 Praised loudly

5 Mentalist

6 Take it easy

7 Wanderer

8 Biblical cover-up?

9 Petty of "Tank Girl"

10 — impasse

11 Innocent one

16 Ewe's mate

20 Workout venue

21 Actress Gershon

22 Mark Harmon TV series

23 Melancholy

27 Fella

29 "Atlas Shrugged" hero

30 Exam format

31 "Ratatouille" rat

33 Patty Hearst, for one

35 "Tell —" (Streisand/Dion song)

38 Fr. holy woman

40 Monopoly job

43 Seafood selection

45 Cyclades island

46 Stated

47 Lighten

48 Baby's bed

49 Boo-Boo's buddy

53 — "Magnon Lucy of "Elementary"

54 —

55 Box office buys, slangily

Solution time: 24 mins.

Yesterday's answer 1-6

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Leslie Grace, 27; Robert Sheehan, 34; Nicolas Cage, 58; Katie Couric, 65.

**Happy Birthday:** Take nothing for granted, and forge ahead with optimism. Don't waste valuable time on things that don't matter. A positive attitude coupled with the desire to make alterations at home consistent with your long-term plans will help you maintain a better quality of life. Tidy up loose ends that stand between you and what you want to achieve. Your numbers are 9, 17, 21, 29, 32, 37, 43.

**ARIES (March 21-April 19):** You'll face opposition from someone competitive. Don't let anyone disrupt your plan. Keep your eye on what you want to achieve, and put your intelligence and energy into reaching your goal. Distance yourself from high-risk situations and people. \*\*\*

**TAURUS (April 20-May 20):** Don't let stubbornness set in when you should be exploring the possibilities. Learn all you can regarding the ins and outs of something that can help you perfect a skill you want to use to your advantage. Change begins with you. \*\*\*\*

**GEMINI (May 21-June 20):** Put one foot in front of the other, and continue to push your way to the front of the line. Use your intelligence and a little brute force until you are happy with the results you achieve. Speak on your behalf, and avoid being misinterpreted. \*\*

**CANCER (June 21-July 22):** Incorporate your imagination into everything you do, and you'll stand out and make a difference. Don't expect everyone to be on your

side; jealousy will prevail, and it's up to you to stay focused on giving your all and doing your best. \*\*\*\*\*

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22):** Learn through observation. If you move forward without thinking about consequences, you'll end up having to do things twice. Don't let change throw you off guard. Analyze what's happening, and make the necessary adjustments that offset any chance of failure. \*\*\*

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22):** You can have fun and make an impression without overspending. Be innovative, and you'll develop a cost-efficient plan that will open doors and offer insight into new and exciting possibilities. Don't let negativity stand in your way. \*\*\*

**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22):** A disciplined approach to what others expect of you will help you finish what you start. Take better care of your health and home, and it will spare you loss and regret. Take the path that soothes your soul instead of following someone else. \*\*\*

**SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21):** Refuse to let anyone hold you back. Consider what's best for you, and follow through. It's OK to be different and follow your gut feeling. Surround yourself with like-minded individuals, and do what makes you happy. Romance is favored. \*\*\*\*\*

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21):** Go over every detail. Sharing your thoughts and feelings too soon will backfire. Spend more time observing and less time sharing. Put your time and effort into how best to use

EUGENIA LAST THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY



your skills to get ahead or make a difference. \*\*

**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19):** Follow your interests. Incorporate something you love to do into your daily routine. Work that you enjoy can make your life less stressful. Look into what you need to do to offset negativity and poor decisions. Let go of the past. \*\*\*\*

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18):** Anger will stand between you and what you want to achieve. Refuse to let what others do or say ruffle your feathers. Focus on what you can do to get ahead. Discipline and determination are encouraged. \*\*\*

**PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20):** Turn your dreams into a reality. Don't let what others do anger you. Instead, put your energy where it counts, and concentrate on whatever it takes to achieve happiness. If you can imagine it, you can incorporate it into your life. \*\*\*

**Birthday Baby:** You are unique, creative and attractive. You are instinctual and responsive.

©: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. \*\*: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. \*\*\*: Focus and you'll reach your goals. \*\*\*\*: Aim high; start new projects. \*\*\*\*\*: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku By Dave Green

6 1 8 7 2

5

9 4 5

2 1

7 4 3 6 5

1 7 9

4 6 2 5 3

Difficulty Level ★★★ 1/06

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

4 2 3 8 5 6 1 7 9

5 1 7 2 9 4 3 8 6

9 8 6 3 7 1 5 2 4

1 3 2 7 4 8 6 9 5

8 5 4 6 1 9 7 3 2

6 7 9 5 2 3 4 1 8

3 9 5 1 6 2 8 4 7

7 4 8 9 3 5 2 6 1

2 6 1 4 8 7 9 5 3

Difficulty Level: ★★★

WONDERWORD By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

A BOMBONIERE GIFT Solution: 8 letters

P F S C F A N C Y T D I S H G

O I G I F T A R E S A V P N

R R C G A T R S S Y Y E A R I

C S L T U T S S O E S R U C D

E T A M U R E I O H T T N G D

L C I U E R I E T Y P A A E E

A O C B T M E N F R L E L L W

I M E L T F O F E S A D L P Y

N M P A F B A R R S N U J A S

O U S O B V E O Y A T A D T

R N C I O L N T C L M H E

A I R R T O K E N G T E A E

C O S T H P I P A R W C K T S

A N O N I T A S I S Y D N A C

M B N O B N O B R E T S A O C

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Album, Artistic, Baptism, Birthday, Bonbon, Bottle, Cake, Candle, Candy, Card, Coaster, Coffee, Communion, Crystal, Dessert, Dish, Fancy, Favors, Figurine, First, Gift, Glass, Guest, Honor, Host, Jam, Macaron, Memory, Party, Picture, Plate, Plant, Plate, Porcelain, Ribbon, Satin, Seeds, Special, Sweets, Tags, Tart, Token, Tray, Tulle, Vase, Wedding, Wrap, Year

Yesterday's Answer: Umbrella

The NEW Treasures 46 and 47 can be purchased online at www.WonderWordBooks.com, or call 1-800-642-6430.

STUMPED?

For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.



# Morant scores 26, Grizzlies beat Cavs for 6th straight win



**CLEVELAND** (AP)—Ja Morant scored six of his 26 points in the final 30 seconds, including the go-ahead basket, allowing the Memphis Grizzlies to extend their winning streak to six with a 110-106 victory over the Cleveland Cavaliers on Tuesday night.

Morant gave Memphis a 106-104 lead with a double-pump short jumper, then

stripped the ball from Brandon Goodwin and scored on Cleveland's subsequent possession with 22 seconds remaining.

After Lauri Markkanen's layup pulled the Cavaliers within 108-106, Morant made a pair of free throws to lock up Memphis' 10th road victory in its last 11 games. The Grizzlies won 118-104 at Brooklyn one night earlier.

"At the end of games, I love

## NBA reschedules postponed games, makes other adjustments

The NBA has rescheduled all 11 games that were postponed in December for virus-related reasons and either shifted the times or dates of 10 other games to help accommodate those changes.

Toronto had six games affected, Chicago had five and Brooklyn had four. In all, 18 of the league's 30 teams had at least one game date changed by the postponements or future adjustments, all of which were revealed Monday.

There are now seven teams that have at least one stint of playing four games in five nights: Chicago, Toronto, Brooklyn, Cleveland, Miami, New Orleans and Denver. The original NBA schedule didn't call for any such stretches, though it was unavoidable with the changes.

"The objective and priority here was to avoid teams playing three games in three nights and look for a middle-ground approach," said Evan Wasch, an NBA executive vice president who helps oversee the league's scheduling.

The Nets — who couldn't play at Portland last month because they were missing nearly a dozen players with virus-related issues — have a most unusual schedule coming next week.

Brooklyn plays Sunday against San Antonio at home — then will fly across the country to play the rescheduled game at Portland the next day, Jan. 10. The Nets then come back East and visit Chicago on Jan. 12.

To help with the demands of that Portland trip, the NBA moved Sunday's Spurs-at-Nets game to noon Eastern. The teams had been scheduled to play a night game, but now the Nets should be in Portland by late Sunday night.

There were a couple other options for that Nets-Blazers game, Wasch said, but having it played Jan. 10 was the best for everyone involved.

"The main reason to release these now is because we wanted to make sure that teams had at least one

week's notice on any postponements, from a travel perspective, basketball planning, business, ticket sales, all those things," Wasch said. "It made sense to do it now."

Simply plugging the postponed games back into the calendar could have been done, Wasch said, but moving other games opened more possibilities and avoided the dreaded three-game, three-night stints. And the league started working on potential changes as soon as the first postponements occurred, Wasch said.

"We also didn't want to massively disrupt the existing schedule," Wasch said.

Among the other changes: the anticipated return of former Raptors guard Kyle Lowry to Toronto. It was scheduled for Feb. 3 and now will happen on Feb. 1, when Miami is now slated to make its first appearance there this season. It's still unclear if fans will be at that game; officials in Ontario have limited attendance to 1,000 in the Raptors' home arena.

And the All-Star break for Brooklyn and Washington got one day shorter, with the league rescheduling a postponed Wizards-at-Nets game to Feb. 17. Both teams were originally slated to play their pre-All-Star finales a day earlier.

The NBA was down to 80 players known to be in the health and safety protocols related to the coronavirus Monday night, a significant drop from the middle of last week when the list peaked around 125 players. Many teams also have staff in the protocols, including some coaches.

"We think we're sort of over the hump in terms of the meat of the postponements," Wasch said. "Hopefully, knock on wood, we won't have any. But we certainly don't expect another rash of them like we had, and so we thought it made sense to now put those 11 games back on the schedule."



being the guy to take that shot — make or miss — and I've been delivering of late," Morant said. "When I attack, my job is just to make the right play, whether it's me or it's a drop-off to one of my teammates."

Darius Garland had 27 points and 10 assists in his return to Cleveland's lineup after missing four games in the NBA's health and safety protocols, while Jarrett Allen had 22 points and 12 rebounds. The Cavaliers have dropped four of five.

Kevin Love had 18 points and 10 rebounds off the bench, and Evan Mobley added 17 points and eight boards for Cleveland.

"We're learning that the fourth quarters are what's important," Cavaliers coach J.B. Bickerstaff said. "Every shot, every pass, every possession, every box out, every rotation means everything. Give Memphis credit for hitting the shots at the end."

Jaren Jackson Jr. scored 22 points and Desmond Bane had 11 points and a career-best seven assists for Memphis. Morant also had six assists, but had his franchise-record run of 30-point games end at four.

"It was definitely tough to get to the rim against their

big guys, but I made some big shots to close it out," said Morant, who is averaging 30.7 points and 6.2 assists during the win streak. "It's a good feeling, knowing everyone has the confidence that I can do it."

Grizzlies assistant coach Brad Jones filled in for Taylor Jenkins, who was attending a memorial service for this father-in-law. Jenkins was named Western Conference coach of the month earlier in the day.

"We have a great group of guys and I knew they wouldn't let me get away without celebrating," Jones said, smiling broadly. "I had a bunch of water baths and ice dumped on me, which was the most fun of the night, honestly."

Cleveland, which went 1-2 on its three-game home stand, now embarks on its longest trip of the season. The Cavaliers play their next six on the road.

"We made a couple mistakes, offensively and defensively, at the worst time and weren't in the positions that Coach put us in," Allen said. "It's too bad because we were all excited to have Darius back and missed the energy he brings."

Brandon Clarke finished with 13 points and nine rebounds for Memphis, which

scored 58 points in the paint.

### Suns 123, Pelicans 110

In New Orleans, Devin Booker scored 33 points, Chris Paul added 11 points and 15 assists, and Phoenix beat New Orleans.

Mikal Bridges added 23 points for Phoenix, which picked up its seventh win over the Pelicans in the last nine games. He and Cameron Johnson (18 points) both made five 3-pointers, while veteran center Bismack Biyombo shot 6 for 6 and scored 16.

The Suns led by as many as 16 points in the first quarter but were up just 101-99 after Devonte' Graham made his third 3-pointer of the fourth quarter with 6:21 left. But Booker, with 11 fourth-quarter points, sparked a 22-11 run by the Suns to put away the game.

Graham scored 28 points for New Orleans, which has lost four of five. Jonas Valanciunas finished with 25 points and 16 rebounds.

### Knicks 104, Pacers 94

In New York, RJ Barrett scored 24 of his 32 points in the first half, Julius Randle had 30 points and 16 rebounds in his first game after coming off the COVID-19 health and safety protocols list, and New York beat Indiana.

Memphis Grizzlies' Ja Morant (12) looks to pass against Cleveland Cavaliers' Jarrett Allen (31) in the first half of an NBA basketball game, Tuesday, Jan. 4, 2022, in Cleveland. <sup>AP</sup>

Alec Burks added 14 points for New York (18-20), which snapped a two-game losing streak. Immanuel Quickley chipped in with 11.

Kiefer Skyes scored 22 points in the Pacers' fifth straight loss. Duane Washington Jr. added 17. Domantas Sabonis and Torrey Craig each contributed 15.

### Raptors 129, Spurs 104

In Toronto, Fred VanVleet scored 33 points, Pascal Siakam had 18 points and 12 rebounds, and Toronto extended its winning streak to three by beating San Antonio.

Gary Trent Jr. scored 21 points as the Raptors evened their record at 17-17, reaching the .500 mark for the first time since they were 7-7 after a Nov. 13 home loss to Detroit.

The Raptors have won eight of their past 10 at home.

Toronto's OG Anunoby scored 14 points and rookie Scottie Barnes had 11 points and a career-best eight assists. Justin Champagnie scored a career-high 14 for the Raptors, who matched their season-high point total.

Former Raptors center Jakob Poeltl scored 19 points and Devin Vassell and rookie Josh Primo each had 15 as the slumping Spurs lost their fourth straight. Derrick White scored 12 for San Antonio.

### Lakers 122, Kings 114

In Los Angeles, LeBron James scored 14 of his 31 points in the fourth quarter, Malik Monk added 11 of his 24 in the final seven minutes, and the Los Angeles Lakers held off the Sacramento Kings 122-114 on Tuesday night for their fourth win in five games.

Talen Horton-Tucker scored 19 points for the Lakers, who rallied from a late seven-point deficit with one big basket after another from Monk and James. Monk hit six 3-pointers in yet another impressive offensive game, and Russell Westbrook added 19 points and drew a key late charge as the Lakers climbed back above .500.

Westbrook played 34 minutes in his first turnover-free game since March 14, 2016.

De'Aaron Fox scored 30 points and Buddy Hield added 26 with seven 3-pointers for the Kings, who scored 11 consecutive points early in the fourth quarter before wilting down the stretch. Harrison Barnes had 14 points for Sacramento, which had won three straight over the Lakers in Los Angeles.



# NFL's 2nd season of COVID just as trying as 1st, maybe more

By SCHUYLER DIXON  
AP PRO FOOTBALL WRITER



The NFL worked around COVID-19 with pauses and postponements during a 2020 season that figured to be the worst in dealing with the virus.

Now the league—and its teams, coaches and players—are just working through coronavirus concerns in 2021, even with positive tests skyrocketing compared to late in the season a year ago.

Las Vegas and the Los Angeles Chargers are set for a playoffs-or-bust finale to the first 17-game regular season on Sunday. Masks and large meeting rooms — even virtual position-group gatherings — are as much a part of game plans as Xs and Os for those and other teams on the playoff bubble. Same for the teams already in.

“I’m worried about COVID just like the rest of the league is,” said Dallas coach Mike McCarthy, whose team clinched the NFC East in Week 16. “It’s just another variable in our league to be successful. The experience from last year is definitely beneficial. We’ll do the best we can with it.”

The Philadelphia Eagles are relieved they wrapped up a postseason berth over the weekend because 12 more players landed on the COVID-19 reserve list Monday, including defensive tackle Fletcher Cox and tight end Dallas Goedert.

The league and players’ union agreed to ease return-to-play guidelines as the focus shifted from isolating infected players to encouraging vaccine booster shots as the best way to deal with the highly contagious omicron variant.

There were nearly 600 confirmed positive COVID-19 cases among players and league personnel from Dec. 12 to 25 compared to about 100 from almost the same time-frame in 2020, according to NFL figures.

But the league has only postponed three games, all in Week 15 when two games were moved to Tuesday.

One of the postponements involved Cleveland after Baker Mayfield tested positive as part of an outbreak for the Browns, and the frustrated quarterback lashed out on Twitter as the league was negotiating possible changes to testing protocols.

The game was pushed back two days, and the Browns lost to Las Vegas 16-14. They were eliminated from the playoffs before losing at Pittsburgh on Monday night.

As the numbers escalated,



Cleveland Browns center JC Tretter (64) talks to teammates during the first half of an NFL football game against the New York Giants on Dec. 20, 2020, in East Rutherford, N.J.

the 10-day quarantine was reduced to five for players who test positive but aren’t showing symptoms. The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention adopted similar guidelines about the same time.

“We wanted to go where the science was going, and I will say that that five-day period sort of mirrors the data we have been seeing in our own NFL testing data throughout

the year,” Dr. Allen Sills, the NFL’s chief medical officer, told the NFL Network. “So, it really wasn’t about player availability or roster numbers. It was, ‘What is the science telling us?’”

The changes helped the unvaccinated Carson Wentz of Indianapolis avoid becoming the latest starting quarterback to miss a game. The Colts lost to the Raiders anyway, and need a Week 18 victory over

two-win Jacksonville to make the playoffs.

Kirk Cousins, also unvaccinated, and Minnesota weren’t so lucky. He was out against Green Bay on Sunday, and the Vikings never had much of a chance in a last-gasp effort to keep their postseason hopes alive, losing 37-10.

Baltimore needs a victory over Pittsburgh this week to reach the playoffs, and the Steelers can stay alive with

a win. New Orleans lost to Miami two weeks ago after a COVID-19 outbreak decimated the roster. Still, the Saints can advance if they beat Atlanta and San Francisco loses to the Los Angeles Rams.

“I think the players and staff here handled a lot of challenging things not always perfectly, but we have managed to keep our head above water, keep grinding, and keep fighting,” said Saints coach

Sean Payton, whose team had another outbreak early in the season while also displaced because of damage in New Orleans from Hurricane Ida.

“You’re just looking at the number one goal, outside of winning the division, is making it to the postseason. We have the opportunity to do that this weekend. You just want to find a way to get into the tournament.”

NFL players are traditionally off on Friday nights for Sunday games, and the most recent one fell on New Year’s Eve. It’s safe to say that was a topic of conversation in locker rooms.

“I don’t think many guys are partying right now,” Dallas quarterback Dak Prescott said. “Now that you’re reminding me, there may be a young guy or two that may have the inkling to do that. So we’ll have to just make sure that everybody understands where we are in this season, where we’re trying to go, what the important things are right now.”

Tampa Bay won last season’s Super Bowl in its home stadium with a pandemic-limited crowd of 25,000. While there hasn’t been an indication of reducing capacity for the first Super Bowl in 70,000-seat SoFi Stadium in Inglewood, California, on Feb. 13, the competing teams won’t arrive until late in the week just as they did last year in Florida.

The NFL also has the traditional extra week built into the playoff schedule, between the conference championship games and Super Bowl. There wasn’t a need to adjust during the playoffs last season, but the positive cases all but disappeared as the postseason progressed.

Plenty of the player absences this season, particularly in December, have been late in the week, leaving a feeling of randomness as to whether teams will be missing star players. The anxiety will grow along with the stakes.

“To say that I’m not concerned wouldn’t be accurate,” Rams coach Sean McVay said last month as his team dealt with an outbreak. “I think you want to find out a little bit more because to my understanding, just looking at the landscape of the league, this was as bad as the outbreak has gotten.

“And the hard thing is for some of these guys — and I don’t want to get into the specifics just out of respect for the individuals — but for some of them, there’s no symptoms,” said McVay, whose team has qualified for the playoffs and can win the NFC West with a win over the 49ers or an Arizona loss to Seattle. “They feel great and that’s what’s unfortunate.”

## Hendrickson, 3 other Bengals starters placed on COVID list

Cincinnati sacks leader Trey Hendrickson and three other starters are among five Bengals who were placed on the COVID-19 reserve list Tuesday.

Center Trey Hopkins and left guard Quinton Spain were sidelined along with safety Vonn Bell. The fifth player is linebacker Akeem Davis-Gaither, who has been out with a foot injury.

The Bengals (10-6) have clinched the AFC North title for their first trip to the playoffs since the 2015 season. Cincinnati has an outside chance to earn the AFC’s No. 1 seed Sunday with a win over Cleveland and some help.

The NFL is allowing players to return five days after a positive COVID-19 test if they don’t have symptoms. The reduction last week from the previous isolation time of 10 days includes unvaccinated players.

Hendrickson is fifth in the NFL with a career-high 14



Baltimore Ravens’ Josh Johnson (15) looks to throw against Cincinnati Bengals’ Trey Hendrickson (91) during the first half of an NFL football game, Sunday, Dec. 26, 2021, in Cincinnati.

sacks. Pittsburgh’s T.J. Watt leads with 21½.

About the same number of players—approximately 20—went on and came off the COVID-19 list Tuesday.

Arizona, which has qualified for the playoffs and can still win the NFC West, activated four players off the list and added two. The Cardinals play Seattle on Sunday.

A pair of Arizona’s return-

ing players are starters: tackle D.J. Humphries and linebacker Markus Golden. The returning backups are linebacker Devon Kennard and cornerback Breon Borders. Two backups went on the COVID-19 list in Zach Kerr and linebacker Tanner Vallejo.

Green Bay activated two starters in safety Darnell Savage and defensive lineman

Kingsley Keke, along with reserve tackle Dennis Kelly and backup receiver Amari Rodgers. Lineman Billy Turner went on the COVID-19 list. The Packers have locked up the No. 1 seed in the NFC going into their regular-season finale against Detroit.

San Francisco, which needs a win over the Los Angeles Rams or a New Orleans loss to reach the postseason, had two backups sidelined in defensive backs Dontae Johnson and Jimmie Ward.

The Browns placed running back D’Ernest Johnson on the COVID-19 list. Johnson has been a solid backup to Nick Chubb and Kareem Hunt, rushing for 411 yards and two touchdowns.

The Browns got linebacker Elijah Lee back off the COVID-19 list and activated quarterback Nick Mullens and safety Cedric Thompson off the practice squad COVID-19 list.



# Look for Norway to top medal table again at Winter Olympics

By STEPHEN WADE  
AP SPORTS WRITER



The Winter Olympics open in 30 days, and Norway is expected to head the medal standings for the second straight time, even topping its record haul of 39 medals in 2018 in Pyeongchang, South Korea.

This is the prediction of U.S.-based Gracenote Sports, which released its medal table forecast on Wednesday with the Beijing Winter Games opening on Feb. 4.

Nielsen-Gracenote supplies statistical analysis to sports league around the world. Its Olympic numbers are based off computer models that analyze the most recent results in major competitions—and smaller ones—in the runup to Beijing.

Norway is predicted to win 22 gold medals and 45 overall. More than half of Norway's medals are predicted to come in cross country skiing and biathlon.

Second place, if total med-

als is used for the ranking order, will be the Russian Olympic Committee with 11 gold and 32 overall. The team in Beijing, as in Tokyo, will be known as the ROC, or the Russian Olympic Committee.

The ROC must compete without its national flag or anthem, fallout from a state-backed doping program dating from the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympics. Many critics say the punishment is negligible since athletes still compete in national colors.

Under the IOC guidelines, the athletes will represent not their country, but the ROC.

Germany is picked to finish third with 12 gold and 25 overall. After this, the next seven countries are closely grouped. They are: United States (7 gold, 22 overall), Canada (6-22), Sweden (7-21), Switzerland (5-21), Netherlands (6-20), Austria (5-18), and France (2-18).

Japan is expected to produce its most overall medals in a Winter Olympics with 17, including four gold medals. Host nation China is predicted to win six gold and 11 overall.



Staff members hold up medals as they rehearse a victory ceremony at the Beijing Medals Plaza of the Winter Olympics in Beijing, China on Jan. 3, 2022.

The Beijing Olympics have been shrouded in controversy with the United States and several other countries declining to send any high-ranking political representatives to Beijing. At the heart are al-

legations of crimes against humanity that target mostly Muslim ethnic minorities in the northwestern region of Xinjiang.

Simon Gleave, who heads research for Gracenote, said

predictions for Beijing are even more difficult with the pandemic. Athletes have missed competitions because of travel restrictions, particularly last season. And, of course, last-minute entry lists

can change if athletes test positive for the coronavirus.

"Hopefully we have the kind of forecast which gets us as close as we usually do," Gleave told The Associated Press.

"We're looking to get the top 10 countries to be as close as possible and preferably in the right sort of order," Gleave added. "But there will be changes to this because it is sports. Sports is unpredictable. We can't get this absolutely bang-on, nor should we expect to."

A big question is what to do about men's ice hockey. The NHL's withdrawal late last year shakes up the strength of many of the teams. Gleave said Gracenote had originally picked Canada to win gold, followed by Finland and the United States.

Gleave said the new projection has Finland winning gold, followed by ROC with bronze for Canada.

Gracenote is expected to update the medal predictions around Jan. 19 and issue a final forecast just days before the Olympics open as entry lists are firmed up.

## TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

### NBA STANDINGS

#### EASTERN CONFERENCE

##### Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Brooklyn	23	12	.657	—
Philadelphia	20	16	.556	3½
Toronto	17	17	.500	5½
Boston	18	19	.486	6
New York	18	20	.474	6½

##### Southeast Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Miami	23	15	.605	—
Washington	19	18	.514	3½
Charlotte	19	19	.500	4
Atlanta	16	20	.444	6
Orlando	7	31	.184	16

##### Central Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Chicago	25	10	.714	—
Milwaukee	25	14	.641	2
Cleveland	21	17	.553	5½
Indiana	14	24	.368	12½
Detroit	7	28	.200	18

#### WESTERN CONFERENCE

##### Southwest Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Memphis	25	14	.641	—
Dallas	19	18	.514	5
San Antonio	14	22	.389	9½
New Orleans	13	25	.342	11½
Houston	10	28	.263	14½

##### Northwest Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Utah	27	10	.730	—
Denver	18	17	.514	8
Minnesota	17	20	.459	10
Portland	14	22	.389	12½
Oklahoma City	13	23	.361	13½

##### Pacific Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Golden State	29	7	.806	—
Phoenix	29	8	.784	½
L.A. Lakers	20	19	.513	10½
L.A. Clippers	19	19	.500	11
Sacramento	16	23	.410	14½

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

## UOG joins the International University Sports Federation

The University of Guam Triton Athletics Department has announced that it will be joining the International University Sports Federation, known as FISU. Specifically, the University of Guam is joining the FISU Oceania Association, based in Australia, which aims to promote university sports programs in Oceania at the regional and international level.

"We are very excited to join FISU Oceania as well as the overall FISU program," said UOG Athletics Director Doug Palmer. "We're looking forward to the opportunity to

compete internationally and hopefully host FISU events at the UOG Calvo Field House."

Membership with FISU Oceania will give UOG students, sports officials, and coaches the opportunity



to participate in international sporting opportunities, including the FISU World University Games. The university also plans to take part in the UNESCO-declared International Day of University Sport, which takes place every Sept. 20 with the focus of creating

links between universities and their local communities related to sports, physical activity, and healthy living.

The membership will also provide training and education opportunities

in sports event management for student-athletes, coaches, and administrators, such as through the annual FISU Volunteer Leaders Academy and the Healthy Campus Program.

FISU Oceania President David Schmude said the organization is pleased to connect

with the University of Guam.

"We look forward to working with Athletics Director Doug Palmer and his team at the university to provide these opportunities and help them achieve their sporting goals as we move towards 2022/2023," he said.

The University of Guam will be a probationary member in 2022 and will become a full member in 2023. Organizations in the Federated States of Micronesia, the Northern Mariana Islands, and the Marshall Islands are also members of FISU Oceania. (PR)

## FIL-TAGA

From Page 20

Links in Talafofo with an 11:30am tee off this time.

The second round of the yearend tourney will coincide with the club's January Ace of the Month Tournament. An awards ceremony for the Ace of Aces Tournament will be held starting 7pm on Jan. 22 at the Jang Gun Korean Restaurant across the former Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan along Royal Palm Avenue in Garapan.

Only the 12 monthly qualifiers can play on the first round, but all Fil-Taga members can participate in the second round as it also serves as the January qualifier.

The 12 monthly winners that will compete in the 2021 Ace of Aces Tournament are the following: Henry Bautista (January), Ganacias

(February), Eli Buenaventura (March), Tony Cabrera (April), Retardo (May), Lito Mendoza (June), Ruben Avendano (July), Ronnie Santos (August), Mike Cruz (September), Cataluna (October), Ed Varias (November) and Burt Suda (December).

Last year, Henry Bautista won the Fil-Taga Golfers Association's 2020 Ace of Aces Tournament after finishing the two-round competition with a net 138.

The 16-handcapper shot a net 73 in the first round of play at the Laolao Bay Golf & Resort last Jan. 16, before carding a net 65 in the second and final round of the season-ending competition last Jan. 23 at the Kingfisher Golf Links. Hak Chon Bae came in second with a two-round total of net 143 with Ruben Avendaño completing the Top 3 with a net 144.

## KATHY

From Page 20

your partner and a positive mindset as well as staying hydrated and focused went a long way in determining her success.

NMIVA president Somia Quan was completely in awe with Winkfield's performance during the tryout.

"Kathy Winkfield is a tough woman and competitor. If anyone was going to compete, let alone win, a beach volleyball tournament a couple weeks from having a baby, it was go-

ing to be her! It was unbelievable and fantastic!"

Asked who she is dedicating her almost superhuman win in the King and Queen of the Court, Winkfield's ready answer was her husband—Jacoby.

"I want to thank my husband for the support of being able to continue playing despite our busy schedules and pushing me to try out," she said.

The now mother of three said as if it's not already obvious, she really is hoping to be selected to the CNMI National Beach Volleyball Team for the Mini Games that the islands

will be hosting for the first time ever this year.

"I am really looking forward to representing the CNMI in this year's Mini Games if I get picked. I have been wanting to for a while but every time I wanted to previously, I was either away, giving birth, or unqualified to compete."

Winkfield first spiked a volleyball in high school. That kicked off a 22-year love affair with the sport that even saw her play competitively in Japan.

"My high school only had volleyball as a team sport dur-

ing my senior year so that was the first time I played on a team and was also the co-captain of the team. Then in college, I played intramural indoor volleyball and then started beach volleyball and competed in tournaments at the beach."

When she moved to Japan after her studies, Winkfield played nine-man volleyball for four years before returning to the U.S. mainland where she continued to play indoor, grass, and beach volleyball and competed in tournaments in New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

## ORRIN

From Page 20

the Dec. 20 event would also help determine what areas of his run needs to be tweaked.

"Winning this run is a good benchmark in letting me know where I'm at in refer-

ence to my time and what I need to do in order to improve on my times, especially for Mini Games. I dedicate every run and event to first and foremost God, then my son, Darrion Joseph Pharmin, but this run was also for those we lost this year during this pan-

demie crisis," said Pharmin.

He also mentioned his sponsor, Latte Built Fitness, as one of his biggest supporters and Northern Marianas Athletics for continuing to stage running events despite the pandemic.

"Aside from my coaches, families, and NMA, Latte

Built has been there for me since Day 1 of my training journey for the Mini Games," he added.

The rest of the events for last Dec. 20's local Oceania Virtual Championships will be reported in tomorrow's issue of *Saipan Tribune*.





**Morant scores 26, Grizzlies beat Cavs for 6th straight win**

**PAGE 17**

# Saipan Tribune Sports

**Look for Norway to top medal table again at Winter Olympics**

**PAGE 19**



**20** THURSDAY, JANUARY 6, 2022

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

## Kathy Winkfield: From expecting to excellent

By MARK RABAGO  
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

**K**athy Winkfield is what you call a true gamer.

Weeks after giving birth, the 40-year-old Math instructor at Northern Marianas College topped the women's division of the King and Queen of the Court last Nov. 11 at the sand courts of the Crowne Plaza Resort.

The event was used by the Northern Mariana Islands Volleyball Association as part of a series of tryouts to help them determine the men's and women's teams for this year's Pacific Mini Games.

Winkfield admitted it took a lot of effort and discipline before and after giving birth



to be on tip-top shape to compete much less win the volleyball tryout/tournament.

"Exercise and a healthy diet helped with the smooth pregnancy which led to the fastest recovery I've had in comparison to my other two births. I was playing volleyball up to seven months and doing yoga and

Pilates every day after that up until birth," she said.

Of course, she also didn't let her pregnancy get in the way of still playing her favorite sport.

"Continuing to play volleyball for as long as I was able to while I was pregnant helped a lot along with regularly exercising."

Her persistence in staying in shape only became more steadfast after giving birth.

"On the second day after my pregnancy I continued with postpartum yoga and Pilates as well as breastfeeding. During the pregnancy, I had gestational diabetes so I really had to watch what I ate and keep a healthy diet both for me and the baby."

During the tournament itself, the New Jersey native said aside from volleyball skills, communication with

**See KATHY on Page 19**



Kathy Winkfield is seen here in action in the King and Queen of the Court held last Nov. 11 at the sand courts of the Crowne Plaza Resort.

MARK RABAGO

## Orrin tops 400m of NMA virtual meet



By MARK RABAGO  
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Orrin Pharmin is getting back to form and proved it by winning the men's 400m of the local Oceania Virtual Championships held last Dec. 20 at the Oleai track and field.

Pharmin topped the run around the full oval in a flat minute to beat Theo Rodgers (1:00.6) and Edward Dela Cruz Jr. (1:50).

"I've been off for three years now and I'm back. I just started training in 2021 to help represent the CNMI track and field team in the Pacific Mini Games that we are hosting this year," he said.

He said going back to the sport he loves was a real struggle.

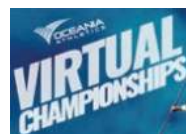
"It was tough when I first started training, getting myself in shape, etc. and it is still tough, especially in this pandemic. But I'm still trying my best to get in top shape and hopefully improve on my overall performance, especially for the Mini Games."

Pharmin said training and competing in this era of COVID-19 has its pros and cons.

"Aside from protocols, running virtually is different. I feel less pressure compared to having my competitors from the different islands and countries physically present, but either way, it is based on our times. I still need to keep that in mind whenever I'm running in these virtual events," he said.

He also admitted that his performance in

**See ORRIN on Page 19**



## Fil-Taga Ace of Aces reset for a week

By MARK RABAGO  
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR



The Fil-Taga Golfers Association has moved its two-round Ace of

Aces Tournament to a week later due to scheduling conflicts with qualifiers.

The yearned golfer of the year competition was supposed to be held on consecutive Saturdays starting this weekend, Jan. 8, but will now begin a week later with the first round on Jan. 15 at the Laolao Bay Golf & Resort east course. Tee off is as 12pm.

The next Saturday, Jan. 22, the second round of Fil-Taga's Ace of Aces Tournament will be held at the Kingfisher Golf

**See FIL-TAGA on Page 19**



Henry Bautista, center, receives his trophy from Tony Cabrera, left, and Ruben Avendano during the awards ceremony for the 2020 Fil-Taga Golfers Association Ace of Aces Tournament last Jan. 16.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO